

WORKERS WORLD

Workers and oppressed peoples of the world unite! workers.org



DEC. 2, 2010 Vol. 52, No. 47 50¢

Rebellion grows against occupiers

U.S., U.N. & cholera out of Haiti!

By G. Dunkel

For more than a week, mass protests against the U.N.'s occupation have broken out throughout Haiti, especially in Cap-Haïtien on its northern coast and Port-au-Prince, the country's capital. Protests have also taken place in southern cities like Cayes and in the center of the country in Gonaïve.

What fueled these protests, which involved burning barricades, trenches, trees and rock piles placed across National Route 1 and city streets, as well as militant marches, were the raging cholera epidemic and the widespread belief among the people that U.N. troops have introduced the disease into their country. By Nov. 20, more than 1,100 Haitians had died of cholera, and nearly 20,000 were hospitalized.

However, it was clear from the protesters' slogans, such as "Down with American imperialism! U.N. and cholera out of Haiti!" that there is an understanding that while the troops on the ground wear blue helmets embossed with 'U.N.,' it is the U.S. which calls the shots. (French TV5 news, Nov. 18).

The U.N.'s official role in Haiti has been to ensure stability, which is why its 12,000-member armed force, the Minustah, is officially called the U.N. Stabilization Mission in Haiti.

Minustah has been the main military force in Haiti since June 2004, when it took over from a coalition of U.S., French and Canadian imperialist troops that occupied Haiti two months earlier. This was after the second coup against democratically elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, when U.S. Special Forces kidnapped him to the Central African Republic. (See "Haiti: A Slave Revolution.")

When the U.N. command structure was crushed by its headquarters' collapse during the January earthquake, the U.S. rushed in more than 20,000 troops and seized control of Haiti's air- and seaports. This kept many emergency supplies for aid organizations from arriving quickly and made a coordinated relief operation harder. Most land-based U.S. troops were withdrawn by mid-March.

When Hurricane Tomas threatened Haiti in early November, the Pentagon moved in the helicopter carrier Iwo Jima with "emergency supplies" and a brigade of Marines. Since Tomas spared Haiti from a major catastrophe, the country was spared another U.S. invasion. Both the act of sending the Iwo Jima and the U.S.'s so-called "humanitarian" troop inva-

sion in January make it clear that the U.S. not only directs the work of Minustah, but is prepared to back it up militarily at the drop of a hat.

Thousands just came out in Cap-Haïtien, the country's second-largest city. They threw rocks and blocked streets. After riot police fired on demonstrators, police stations at Barrière Bouteille and Pont Neuf were burned. A World Food Program warehouse in the city's southeastern section was liberated.

Stanley Jean-Mary, a reporter for France 24 news service who is also a leftist and a community leader in Cap-Haïtien, writes, "For two years, we have had to deal with an irresponsible government, which was not prepared. After the earthquake, it gave up. Then there was Hurricane Tomas, followed by the cholera epidemic. The situation was falling apart but the government did not come to the aid of the people."

"When my neighbors learned that three people

Continued on page 9

FREE POLITICAL PRISONERS



Leonard Peltier, Lynne Stewart 2, 3

SCHOOL OF THE AMERICAS PROTEST

Thousands say 'Shut it down!' 8

PLAYING CHESS While Black 7

MSU STUDENT SIT-IN

Against rape culture 5

GM PROFITS UP

Wages, benefits down 4

NEW YORK CITY

Flashmobs for Jobs demand extended benefits



PHOTO: DINAIE ANDERSON

By Dinae Anderson

"Open the vaults, hire the workers." That was one of many chants heard at the Federal Reserve Bank in New York City on Nov. 20. The 99ers — those who have been unemployed for more than 99 weeks whose benefits have ended — other unemployed and their supporters reenacted a 1930s headline, a notable image throughout the Great Depression. With stale loaves of bread and strong

will, the crowd showed New Yorkers that they were tired of the government ostracizing them and leaving them hopeless and in despair.

This action came in light of Congress not renewing unemployment extension checks due to expire Nov. 30. Two million workers will be affected immediately, and millions more will follow in the months ahead. There will be no income for them and their families, which is especially hard

Continued on page 7

Subscribe to Workers World

☐ Eight weeks trial \$4

www.workers.org
☐ One year subscription \$25

212.627.2994

Name _____

Address _____

City /State/Zip _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Workers World Newspaper 55 W. 17th St. #5C, NY, NY 10011

FREE LEONARD PELTIER!

His family accuses U.S. gov’t of medical neglect

The following press release was issued on Nov. 15 by Delaney Bruce, Legal Team Liaison, Leonard Peltier Defense Offense Committee, P.O. Box 7488, Fargo, ND 58106; phone 701-235-2206; contact@whoisleonard-peltier.info

“A man dies from prostate cancer every 16 minutes in this country. Why does my brother have to wait over a year to receive even a diagnosis?”

Native American activist Leonard Peltier, who maintains his innocence, was wrongfully convicted in connection with the shooting deaths of two agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in 1977. Imprisoned for 35 years — currently at the federal prison in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania — Peltier has been designated a political prisoner by Amnesty International. Nelson Mandela, Desmond Tutu, 55 members of Congress and others — including a judge who sat as a member of the court in two of Peltier’s appeals — have all called for his immediate release. Widely recognized for his humanitarian works and a six-time Nobel Prize nominee, Peltier also is an accomplished author and painter.

Sister Betty Solano says Peltier began exhibiting symptoms commonly attributed to prostate cancer over a year ago. His age (he is 66 years old) and family history are risk factors for the disease. Pressured by Peltier’s attorneys, the Bureau of Prisons ran standard blood tests in June. Peltier received the results last week, over four months later. A physician only now says a biopsy is needed to make a diagnosis.

Prostate cancer affects one in six men in the United States. Medical experts agree that the cure rate for prostate cancer is high, but only if detected early.

Even if Peltier doesn’t have cancer, the symptoms indicate a serious medical condition and one that could lead to serious complications if left untreated.

A physician who conducted an independent review of Peltier’s medical records in 2000 concluded that Peltier’s overall medical treatment is below a reasonable standard of care. Decades ago, Peltier suffered a stroke which left him nearly blind in one eye, damage physicians say could have been prevented had he been treated sooner. In the 1990s, there was international outrage after the BOP botched surgeries to correct a jaw problem. Only then was Peltier transferred to the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota for treatment. Subsequent procedures were recommended by a specialist, but never performed by the BOP.

For Native, African-American farmers

U.S. Senate stalls reparation payments

By Abayomi Azikiwe
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

A lame-duck United States Senate approved a \$4.6 billion settlement for Native and African-American farmers who have suffered decades of discrimination by governmental agencies. The measures were supported by the Obama administration in 2009.

Nonetheless, funding for the compensation packages, now known as the Claims Settlement Act of 2010, has been delayed because of the Senate’s failure to provide funding to make payments to the victims who number in the tens of thousands.

Commemorate 41st National Day of Mourning

On the U.S. ‘thanksgiving’ holiday. Many Native Americans do not celebrate the arrival of the Pilgrims and other European settlers. ‘Thanksgiving’ is a reminder of the genocide of millions of Native people, the theft of their lands and the relentless assault on their culture. Honor Native ancestors and the struggles of Native peoples to survive today.

Join Us
THURSDAY
NOV 25 • Noon
Cole’s Hill, Plymouth, Mass.
(above Plymouth Rock)
March through Plymouth,
Speak-Out, followed by Social

The International Action Center is sending a bus from New York City. Call 212-633-6646. www.iacenter.org



“Last week, at the United Nations, the United States claimed that it is unequivocally committed to the humane treatment of all individuals in detention, including criminal detention. Delaying tests, avoiding a diagnosis, and preventing proper medical treatment for a potentially life-threatening disease is not humane by anyone’s definition,” a spokesperson for the Leonard Peltier Defense Offense Committee said.

“Unfortunately, this situation isn’t unique to Mr. Peltier. Many U.S. prisoners die prematurely because treatment is delayed or denied.”

Family members want the government to release Peltier, who was denied parole in 2009. His North Dakota tribe has twice passed a resolution asking the government to transfer Peltier into their custody. Peltier’s many supporters believe his release from prison is the only way Peltier will receive humane treatment.

Source: U.S. vs. Leonard Peltier: Evidence of a Wrongful Conviction. From the files of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.



FREE Leonard Peltier

Demand the release of our brother, Native political prisoner Leonard Peltier. Add your voice to the millions worldwide who demand his freedom. Help our struggle to create a true awareness of Native peoples and demonstrate the unity of Indigenous peoples internationally. Help shatter the false image of the Pilgrims and the unjust system based on racism, sexism, the oppression of lesbian/gay/bi/trans people and war.

Contact:
United American Indians of New England/LPSG
Phone 617-522-6626
info@uaine.org www.uaine.org

★ In the U.S.

- Flashmobs for Jobs demand extended benefits..... 1
- Free Leonard Peltier..... 2
- U.S. Senate stalls reparation payments 2
- ‘We are all Lynne Stewart’ 3
- No profit from injustice..... 3
- Activists remember the homeless who have died 3
- GM ‘comeback story’ leaves workers behind 4
- Workers need a new WPA jobs program 4
- Top Ten on bailout 4
- A real California tour without Hollywood stars 5
- Students demand action against rape 5
- Protests beat back bigots..... 5
- Stop attacks on workers of all ages 6
- Invasive airport body searches elicit mass anger 6
- Labor, parents support special needs children 6
- Fighting racism builds class unity..... 7
- Chess-playing while Black in NYC..... 7
- Stop FBI actions Nov. 29-Dec. 4..... 7
- Thousands demand School of the Americas’ closing 8
- Transgender Day of Remembrance commemorated 8
- UAW supports Coca-Cola boycott 8
- Musical captures political legacy of Nigerian artist, activist 10

★ Around the world

- U.S., U.N. & cholera out of Haiti!..... 1
- Memorial meeting celebrates Lolita Lebrón’s life 8
- NATO summit plans for continued aggressions 9
- 30,000 protest NAT O Summit in Lisbon 9
- The Nobel Peace Prize and Liu Xiaobo 11
- The media and Gaza, part 3 11

★ Editorials

- Two tier-wage system & class struggle..... 10

★ Noticias En Español

- El movimiento inmigrante..... 12
- Seguro Social atacado..... 12

Workers World
55 West 17 Street
New York, N.Y. 10011
Phone: (212) 627-2994
Fax: (212) 675-7869
E-mail: ww@workers.org
Web: www.workers.org
Vol. 52, No. 47 • Dec. 2, 2010
Closing date: Nov. 23, 2010
Editor: Deirdre Griswold
Technical Editor: Lal Roohk
Managing Editors: John Catalinotto, LeiLani Dowell, Leslie Feinberg, Kris Hamel, Monica Moorehead, Gary Wilson
West Coast Editor: John Parker
Contributing Editors: Abayomi Azikiwe, Greg Butterfield, Jaimeson Champion, G. Dunkel, Fred Goldstein, Teresa Gutierrez, Larry Hales, Berta Joubert-Ceci, Cheryl LaBash, Milt Neidenberg, Bryan G. Pfeifer, Betsey Piette, Minnie Bruce Pratt, Gloria Rubac
Technical Staff: Sue Davis, Shelley Ettinger, Bob McCubbin, Maggie Vascassenno
Mundo Obrero: Carl Glenn, Teresa Gutierrez, Berta Joubert-Ceci, Donna Lazarus, Michael Martínez, Carlos Vargas
Supporter Program: Sue Davis, coordinator
Copyright © 2010 Workers World. Verbatim copying and distribution of articles is permitted in any medium without royalty provided this notice is preserved.
Workers World (ISSN-1070-4205) is published weekly except the first week of January by WW Publishers, 55 W. 17 St., N.Y., N.Y. 10011. Phone: (212) 627-2994. Subscriptions: One year: \$25; institutions: \$35. Letters to the editor may be condensed and edited. Articles can be freely reprinted, with credit to Workers World, 55 W. 17 St., New York, NY 10011. Back issues and individual articles are available on microfilm and/or photocopy from University Microfilms International, 300 Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Mich. 48106. A searchable archive is available on the Web at www.workers.org. A headline digest is available via e-mail subscription. Subscription information is at www.workers.org/email.php.
Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Workers World, 55 W. 17 St., 5th Floor, New York, N.Y. 10011.

JOIN US

Workers World Party (WWP) fights for socialism and engages in struggles on all the issues that face the working class & oppressed peoples — Black & white, Latino/a, Asian, Arab and Native peoples, women & men, young and old, lesbian, gay, bi, straight, trans, disabled, working, unemployed & students. If you would like to know more about WWP, or to join us in these struggles, contact the branch nearest you.

National Office
55 W. 17 St.
New York, NY 10011
212-627-2994
wwp@workers.org
Atlanta
P.O. Box 5565
Atlanta, GA 30307
404-627-0185
atlanta@workers.org
Baltimore
c/o Solidarity Center
2011 N. Charles St., Bsm.
Baltimore, MD 21218
443-909-8964
baltimore@workers.org
Boston
284 Amory St.
Boston, MA 02130
617-522-6626
Fax 617-983-3836
boston@workers.org

Buffalo, N.Y.
367 Delaware Ave.
Buffalo, NY 14202
716-883-2534
buffalo@workers.org
Chicago
27 N. Wacker Dr. #138
Chicago, IL 60606
773-381-5839
chicago@workers.org
Cleveland
P.O. Box 5963
Cleveland, OH 44101
216-531-4004
cleveland@workers.org
Denver
denver@workers.org
Detroit
5920 Second Ave.
Detroit, MI 48202
313-459-0777
detroit@workers.org

Durham, N.C.
331 W. Main St., Ste. 408
Durham, NC 27701
durham@workers.org
Houston
P.O. Box 3454
Houston, TX 77253-3454
713-503-2633
houston@workers.org
Los Angeles
5274 W Pico Blvd.
Suite # 207
Los Angeles, CA 90019
la@workers.org
323-515-5870
Milwaukee
milwaukee@workers.org
Philadelphia
P.O. Box 34249
Philadelphia, PA 19101
610-931-2615
phila@workers.org

Pittsburgh
pittsburgh@workers.org
Rochester, N.Y.
585-436-6458
rochester@workers.org
San Diego, Calif.
P.O. Box 33447
San Diego, CA 92163
619-692-0355
sandiego@workers.org
San Francisco
2940 16th St., #207
San Francisco
CA 94103
415-738-4739
sf@workers.org
Tucson, Ariz.
tucson@workers.org
Washington, D.C.
P.O. Box 57300
Washington, DC 20037
dc@workers.org

'WE ARE ALL LYNNE STEWART!'

By Dolores Cox
New York

November 20 marked the one-year anniversary of the incarceration of "The People's Lawyer," 71-year-old Lynne Stewart. The U.S. government sentenced her to 10 years imprisonment for allegedly "aiding a terrorist," the blind Egyptian Sheikh Omar Abdul-Rahman, who is serving a 100-year sentence for complicity in the first bombing attack on the World Trade Center.

Apparently, this is the first time a lawyer has been disbarred or criminally prosecuted for violating an administrative order forbidding the public conveyance of thoughts and words of a client. Stewart's conviction is intended to have a chilling effect on other attorneys who dare to follow in her footsteps. The government has made her part of the their post-9/11 "war on terrorism."

On Nov. 20 close to 100 activists and independent media journalists gathered one more time near the Metropolitan Correctional Center in Manhattan where Stewart is imprisoned. The mood was both spirited and somber. Rally speakers expressed their love and admiration for her courage and willingness to fight against injustice, to speak truth to power and to turn words into action and organizing. They were there to give strength and words of encouragement to Stewart and each other, saying they can't do enough to repay her.

Speakers stated that Stewart served as a role model to many in the legal profession, yet too many of her colleagues lack backbone and principle. They said that the job of all of us is to relieve the burdens of all subjugated political prisoners residing in the citadels of injustice and its predatory system. And they asserted that we must continue the struggle to protect our First Amendment rights, resist U.S. fascism and dare to stand up against aggression and tyranny.

Speakers described Stewart as a woman who joins all great women in history who have been punished for making change for the betterment of humanity.

During the rally Ralph Poynter, Stewart's partner, received a phone call from California activists who said, "Stay strong. We are all Lynne Stewart!"

As supporters began to march to the prison for their outside "visit," several cop cars approached in an attempt to redirect them. The marchers, however, continued. Police harassment and intimidation continued throughout, but supporters were not deterred.

As darkness came, protesters turned on flashlights, accompanied by drummers, noisemakers and shouts toward the prison windows.

Poynter shouted, "We're here for you, Lynne, and all the incarcerated with you." Collectively, the group chanted, "Free

Lynne Stewart," "We'll continue your fight," "Free all political prisoners," "Never give up hope," "We love you, Lynne" and "Be like Lynne, struggle to win." Due to a lockdown and possible threats, however, only an occasional brave prisoner appeared at the windows for brief moments.

Upon leaving, Poynter shouted his final message to Stewart: "Remember, we're here for you, Lynne. You will never be forgotten. See ya later. This is not good-bye."

Stewart's supporters were all aware that their greetings to Lynne might be the last chance to "visit" her in New York, as

Lynne Stewart at
a rally for Mumia
Abu-Jamal.



an impending out-of-state transfer seems imminent. When that will happen and to which location is unknown at this time.

After leaving the prison, Stewart supporters attended a commemoration of the life of another freedom fighter, Puerto Rican Nationalist Party activist Dolores "Lolita" Lebron. She was incarcerated by the U.S. government for 25 years for fighting for Puerto Rican independence. Lebron passed away on Aug. 1. □

Supporters of detained immigrants say:

'No profit from injustice'

On Nov. 19 Emily Guzman, with her young son at her side, spoke to 100 or so protesters at the entrance to the Stewart Detention Center outside Lumpkin, Ga. Close to 2,000 immigrants are currently detained at the facility in this rural county awaiting deportation to Mexico, Jamaica, Bangladesh and the Philippines, among many other countries.

At times she fought back tears as she described her spouse, Pedro Guzman, who has been held for more than a year in the privately owned and operated prison. Pedro came with his mother from Mexico when he was 8 years old. He and Emily, a U.S. citizen, have a 4-year-old son, Logan. Although Pedro was granted bail in one legal proceeding, he remains incarcerated, separated from his family.

Last year this annual protest, scheduled to coincide with the School of the Americas activities in nearby Columbus, Ga., focused on the death of Roberto Martinez Medina, who died of a treatable heart infection while at Stewart. Martinez is just one of the 114 detainees who have died nationwide while in Immigration and Customs Enforcement custody. Many of them died at for-profit facilities operated by Corrections Corporation of America and other multimillion-dollar businesses.

The situations of these two individuals highlight the deplorable health care, lack

of legal resources and due process, and multiple other issues that characterize the horrendous treatment given immigrants in detention.

Emily Guzman's painful yet powerful story evoked a strong sense of outrage and commitment among members of the crowd to act against the inhumane, anti-

immigrant policies carried out at Stewart.

When people approached the barricade, determined to take the protest onto the prison grounds, eight were arrested, including Emily Guzman's mother.

The struggle will continue to "Shut Stewart down" and "Bring Pedro home."
— Dianne Mathiowetz

Activists remember the homeless who have died



PHOTO: AL VIOLA

For the 22nd year, the Metro Atlanta Task Force for the Homeless organized a march Nov. 1 through downtown to City Hall to remember the men, women and children who died without shelter. Several hundred residents of the shelter at Peachtree and Pine took part along with activists from peace, justice and faith-based organizations.

With the message "Homelessness is a matter of life and death" on the lead banner, the demonstrators carried three coffins past the highrise hotels and office towers that flank Peachtree, Atlanta's major street. Chants demanding housing and jobs echoed off the glass-covered buildings. Restaurant workers, pedestrians and passing motorists signaled their approval as the loud, colorful march passed by.

Later that evening at a requiem mass held at The Cathedral of St. Phillip, the names of 48 people who had died homeless in Atlanta this past year were called out.

The Task Force, which operates the

large emergency shelter just north of the downtown area, has taken legal actions against big business leaders and associations, charging them with illegally conspiring to deprive the shelter of public and private funding and instigating the foreclosure on the building.

With the eviction blocked, the Peachtree-Pine shelter continues to provide thousands of poor people with help getting all kinds of assistance; sheltering hundreds every night; offering art space to painters and photography, bicycle repair and computer training; and providing a performance and meeting space.

The Task Force has earned the enmity of the corporate elite by relentlessly challenging the criminalization of poor people and the privatization of public space, exposing the racist and class bias of urban "renewal" in Atlanta.

For more information, go to www.homelesstaskforce.org.

— Dianne Mathiowetz

For Native, African-American farmers U.S. Senate stalls reparation payments

Continued from page 2

In regard to the class-action lawsuit involving Native Americans, Cobell vs. Salazar had been filed 15 years prior to the recent Senate action. Elouise Cobell of the Blackfeet nation had filed the claim based on the mispending of Native monies by the Departments of Treasury and the Interior.

"I want to thank Senators Baucus and Tester for leading the fight in the Senate to provide a long-overdue conclusion to this settlement," Cobell stated. (Missoula Independent, Nov. 19)

"Too many Native Americans have died waiting for justice. My greatest optimism lies ahead hoping that today's news gives way to permanent reform in the way the Departments of Interior and Treasury account for and manage Individual Indian Money accounts."

John Boyd, the president of the National Black Farmers Association, said of the Senate bill that "passage of this bill is long overdue. Black farmers have already died at the plow waiting for justice." (afro.com, Nov. 19)

Boyd noted, "The amount of money will not put farmers back into business." What the leader is referring to is the ev-

er-increasing role of agribusiness, which dominates farming and food production in general.

Over the last 90 years, African-American farmers have lost over 13 million acres of land, largely in the South, where their ancestors were enslaved for two-and-a-half centuries.

Republican senators had held up this bill and similar ones, claiming they would only contribute to the national deficit.

One of the main opponents of approving the settlements to African-American and Native farmers was Sen. Tom Coburn of Oklahoma, who only dropped his objection when it was agreed that monies for the bill would be taken from "surplus funds" provided for nutritional programs for women and children.

At the same time the bill must go back to the House for final approval. This will reportedly take place after the holiday recess in late November.

An afro.com article says, "The matter now goes to the House where even more recalcitrance is expected from lawmakers who contend that the settlement adds to what they consider excessive spending at a time of federal budget deficits." (Nov. 19) □

MARXISM, REPARATIONS & the Black Freedom Struggle

An anthology of writings from Workers World newspaper. Edited by Monica Moorehead. Includes: **Racism, National Oppression & Self-Determination** Larry Holmes **Black Labor from Chattel Slavery to Wage Slavery** Sam Marcy **Black Youth: Repression & Resistance** LeiLani Dowell **The Struggle for Socialism Is Key** Monica Moorehead **Black & Brown Unity: A Pillar of Struggle for Human Rights & Global Justice!** Saladin Muhammad **Alabama's Black Belt: Legacy of Slavery, Sharecropping & Segregation** Consuela Lee **Harriet Tubman, Woman Warrior** Mumia Abu-Jamal **Are Conditions Ripe Again Today? 40th Anniversary of the 1965 Watts Rebellion** John Parker **Racism & Poverty in the Delta** Larry Hales **Haiti Needs Reparations, Not Sanctions** Pat Chin

Available at www.Leftbooks.com and bookstores across the country.



Tom Burell, a member of Black Farmers Agriculturalists Association speaks outside USDA office in 2002.

General Motors

‘Comeback story’ leaves workers behind

By Martha Grevatt

“Americans love a comeback story.” General Motors CEO Daniel Akerson was referring to his company’s Nov. 18 Initial Public Offering of preferred and common stock on the New York Stock Exchange. (Detroit News, Nov. 19) Akerson’s “Americans” — wealthy investors — showed their love by purchasing 451 million GM shares by the end of the day.

The day began with Akerson ringing the bell to signal the start of trading. The confident CEO revved the engine of a sporty new Chevrolet Camaro. The opening price was \$33 per share. The price closed at \$34.19 and rose another seven cents the next day.

At the time of the 2009 bailout, GM stock sold at a 75-year low of 75 cents a share. What would cause a nearly fifty-fold increase in value in such a short time? Did GM suddenly acquire new assets that would increase the worth of its holdings? On the contrary, 11 plants and a number of warehouses, along with some 1,500 dealerships, have been closed as part of the post-bankruptcy restructuring.

Stock prices have little to do with the real value of a company’s assets. They are a reflection of how much an investor is willing to gamble that a company will make profits. In the first three quarters of this year GM has made \$4.2 billion in net profit. Profits are made by exploiting labor.

When the bosses are able to cut wages or to make more products with fewer workers, what they keep for themselves in the form of profit goes up. During the bankruptcy process the United Auto Workers

union made huge concessions. Now GM’s North American unit has made \$4.9 billion in profit in the first three quarters of this year. Per-vehicle profits are estimated to be around \$2,000. The UAW-represented workforce, who once numbered 500,000, now hovers around 50,000. It takes about 30 hours of labor to build a vehicle. Even if we take the grossly inflated cost of labor that GM claims — \$75 per hour — the bosses still get almost as much in profit per vehicle (\$2,000) as the workers earn in wages and other compensation (\$2,250).

Gov’t colludes to shed jobs, slash wages

With 2007 and 2009 concessions, shedding tens of thousands of higher-paid workers and hiring 7,000 new workers at half the pay of “traditional” employees, labor costs have fallen dramatically. Workers are seeing more of the value they produce go to profits than to their own wages and benefits.

That high rate of exploitation was the major selling point in a two-week “road show” in which GM Vice Chairperson Steve Girsky and North American President Mark Reuss gave 85 presentations to potential investors. The company’s prospectus stated, “We have substantially completed the restructuring of our North American operations, which has reduced our cost base and improved our capacity utilization and product line profitability” through “salaried and hourly headcount reductions” and “labor agreement restructuring.”

To “save” GM the federal government loaned the company almost \$50 billion. The U.S. Department of Treasury demanded major contract changes from

UAW members. Voting “no,” workers were told, would mean no loan and thus Chapter Seven liquidation. UAW workers voted to allow GM to close a significant number of facilities, but weren’t told which ones would close until after the vote.

Much of the work has shifted to low-wage countries. The prospectus even bragged, “Approximately 43 percent of our vehicles are manufactured in regions we believe to be low-cost locations, such as China, Mexico, Eastern Europe, India and Russia.”

Wages of future U.S. employees are frozen at \$14 per hour until 2015. Now the UAW leadership has allowed GM to recall some laid-off workers at the lower wage in a Michigan assembly plant. It’s reasonable to assume that the Treasury put pressure on the union to go along with the 50 percent pay cut.

It was to effectuate a rapid and drastic streamlining of operations — President Barack Obama used the phrase “lean and mean” — that the capitalist state temporarily took control of GM. Now that the task is “substantially completed,” the government is in the process of returning the company to private hands. In two days the federal government’s share of GM was reduced from 61 percent to 33 percent. Through the stock sale and payments on the loan GM has repaid \$23 billion to the government.

The state orchestrated a “comeback” on the backs of the workers, and this is the reason for the bosses’ bravado. In the days leading up to the IPO, Akerson boasted that in an improved economy, increased sales volume would allow GM’s net profits to rise to \$13 billion a year. By the second

day of trading that estimate had jumped to \$19 billion. (Detroit News, Nov. 20)

Union must break with capitalists

Akerson is assuming that, despite negotiating vague language on “equity of sacrifice,” the UAW will not get back what it gave up. When the CEO rang the bell, UAW International President Bob King was standing right behind him. “We’ve made a lot of sacrifices,” King told the Detroit News. “This IPO shows that was the right decision.”

In fact what the IPO shows is that GM has increased the rate of exploitation, and done so with UAW leadership’s co-operation. On the shop floor, the expansion of the two-tier wage scale has led to the erosion of worker solidarity. Until King breaks up the decades-old partnership with the bosses, the prevalent mood among the rank-and-file will be one of frustration and demoralization. To make that break, however, what is needed is rejection of increased wage exploitation and profits. The entire capitalist system must be challenged.

Despite the orientation of the union leadership, some autoworkers are trying to figure out how to reverse the givebacks that GM — and Ford and Chrysler — have taken from them. At a Nov. 14 meeting in Toledo, Ohio, a group of anti-concession activists began planning a demonstration outside the North American International Auto Show in Detroit next year. There, and at the national Bargaining Convention in the spring, they will focus on the fight to overturn the two-tier wage scale and bring back equal pay for equal work. □

Workers need a new WPA jobs program

Following are excerpts from a Nov. 13 talk at the Workers World Party national conference by Martha Grevatt, a 23-year auto worker and United Auto Workers activist, now in the Detroit branch. She had been a leading member of the Cleveland branch for many years.

At June’s United Auto Workers convention, AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka stated that 40 million workers are unemployed or underemployed. That’s a staggering figure!

Not surprisingly, organized labor, including the UAW, had a strong presence at the Oct. 2 One Nation march, where job creation was a central demand.

Two days before the march, it was clear it would be big. With much fanfare, the House of Representatives announced a new “jobs bill.” What is it? New tariffs are being imposed on commodities imported from China!

Workers World newspaper called that “baloney.”

What would a real jobs bill look like? The best example in U.S. history was the 1935 Emergency Relief Act that authorized \$5 billion to relieve mass unemployment. It was passed in April. By May, President Franklin Roosevelt had created the Works Progress Administration. Within six months, 3 million workers had gotten jobs — building highways, airports, schools, hospitals, post offices and housing projects.

They did what we call “green jobs” — planting trees and constructing national parks. They did everything, from exterminating rats to making books for the blind. Writers, actors, musicians and visual art-



WW PHOTO: ALAN POLLOCK

Martha Grevatt

ists found work through the WPA. Three-fourths of the \$11 billion spent went to construction projects, benefiting all but three U.S. counties.

Why did the government do this then and why not now? Some might say Roosevelt had a big heart, but he never knew poverty. Wouldn’t President Barack Obama, who didn’t come from wealth, have an even bigger heart for the suffering masses?

The money wouldn’t even need Congressional authorization. Job creation was a stated purpose of the Troubled Assets Relief Program. Since most of the \$700 billion has been repaid — by banks receiving additional government “assistance” — that money is available; \$600 billion could create 12 million jobs paying \$50,000 a year.

As General Motors is making billions in profits, why can’t the majority shareholder — the government — use that money to put Detroit back to work?

What made the 1930s different? Left-wing journalist Mary Heaton Vorse, who was at many protests then, wrote, “Every day in the papers there are headlines: ‘Police disperse unemployment demonstrations’ ... ‘Gas ready for hunger marchers.’ ... The country sees processions of men and women, all demonstrating; a formidable lot of marches on city halls and statehouses have occurred this past couple of years.”

In the years before the WPA, the unemployed were well-organized, engaging thousands of battles — from blocking evictions to facing clubs and bullets in numerous hunger marches. The ruling class had to give the working class something.

But even the WPA was not enough. The auto industry was — and is — a prime example of how the capitalist drive for profit leads to fewer workers doing more work for less pay. What else could be done?

A 1930s leaflet directed to autoworkers was headlined: “Six-hour day, eight-hours pay, keep depression away.” The 30-hour week, with time-and-a-half pay after 30 hours, was fundamental to the original 1933 version of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

The Black-Connery bill passed the Senate; it narrowly failed in the House after Roosevelt withdrew support. However, the demand was kept alive — from the 1934 San Francisco General Strike to the 1937 Flint sit-down strike.

Millions of jobs could be created if Black-Connery were passed today. When France implemented the 35-hour week in the 1990s, 400,000 jobs were created. In 1988, a UAW study concluded that if the Big Three auto companies cut overtime and held the workweek to 40 hours, this

would create 88,000 jobs.

Imagine if hours were cut still further — and in the whole economy! Capitalism is wage-slavery; mass unemployment is its flip side. We need another WPA and a shorter workweek. We need a fighting labor movement again.

As WW’s editorial stated, “Labor of every hue, gender and creed needs the broadest solidarity at home and abroad to fight this global system. We must vigorously reject racism, sexism, anti-gay” — and anti-lesbian, bisexual, transgender and queer — “bigotry, attacks on Muslims and scapegoating of undocumented immigrants.”

When all working class sectors unite, when the class struggle is revived, then capital won’t be so mighty. Then the bosses will be helpless in the face of working-class solidarity.

We’re about making that happen! Power to the workers and oppressed! □

Top 10 reasons Bankers \$600 billion

1. \$600 billion is only enough for about 600 jobs at the going rate for investment banker CEOs. That’s just a drop in the bucket.
2. Even if we cut our pay by 50 percent, that still creates only 1,200 jobs.
3. There are only so many openings for butlers, housekeepers and chauffeurs.
4. We can only build so many luxury hotels for ourselves.

A real California tour without Hollywood stars

Following are excerpts from a Nov. 13 talk at the Workers World Party national conference by John Parker, a leader of the Los Angeles WW branch and a coordinator of the West Coast International Action Center.

Are you ready for your tour of sunny California? We could start by talking about the stars on Hollywood Boulevard. If not, we'll have to discuss how California leads the nation with 941 charter schools targeting public education and unionized teachers. As Marx exposed long ago, capitalism's increasingly more technologically advanced production methods need fewer and fewer educated workers.

The real unemployment rate in California is more than 22 percent once you factor back in the underemployed and discouraged workers. Over the past 30 years layoffs have become a way of life for the vast majority of workers. Instead of implementing real solutions to unemployment, the profit-by-any-means capitalist system only allows the option of pitting worker against worker.

California is next to the apartheid state of Arizona, whose racist legislators try to justify SB 1070 using the unemployment crisis. But the unemployment results from the total reorganization of production by giant monopolies. This started

with the destruction and offshoring of manufacturing plants in the 1970s. It's not the fault of immigrant workers, nor would denying jobs to every immigrant worker in this country change one iota the dynamic of globalization's effects on workers here.

The strength in our demands for jobs correlates with the strength of our unity and solidarity with immigrant workers. That solidarity cannot be sacrificed, and this is uncompromisingly nonnegotiable.

There is a growing movement of militant immigration activists, many of whom are in the Southern California Immigration Coalition of which we are a part. They say that any Schumer-like plans criminalizing immigrants attempt to justify the increasing numbers of immigrants killed at the border between Mexico and California, which has hit record numbers this year.

Los Angeles is the homeless capital of the nation. This housing crisis resulted from the desperate need of financial capitalists to increase their profits cut by the fundamental and inevitable crisis of capitalism: overproduction. California has the highest real number of foreclosures. Empty homes and the homeless sit in torturous view of each other.

As of September, one in eight homes is currently in foreclosure in California. Latino/a and Black people have a foreclo-

sure rate between 1.9 and 2.3 times higher than non-Latinos/as and whites.

Instead of blaming immigrant workers, non-immigrant workers in the U.S. should build unity and expose how bailouts for the banks and imperialist war deny us real government-sponsored jobs programs, like the Works Progress Administration during the Depression.

The drive to maintain profits during this economic crisis creates a new reality for working and poor people, especially Black and Latino/a youth in California who suffer a 40 percent unemployment rate. And we already know the repression and the incarceration rate for Black and Latino/a peoples continues to grow.

The transit cop Johannes Mehserle, who was videotaped killing Oscar Grant in Oakland, will likely spend only seven months in jail. Manuel Jamines, a Guatemalan immigrant and day laborer, was killed by a cop in downtown Los Angeles. James Davis, an 18-year-old Black youth from Watts, was shot in the back while on his knees with hands raised. The cops denied him medical care by a nurse on the scene. Davis died.

The cops' role is to enforce capitalism's attempt to maintain injustice, obedience and order while it increasingly and systematically takes away the necessities of life from working and poor people.



John Parker

On our tour, we did not get to rub elbows with Hollywood stars. But there are some even greater stars, perhaps not from Hollywood, but from South Central and East LA who are today some of the most important forces helping to unify and activate our movement, some of whom spoke at our regional Workers World conference in Los Angeles. These are activists from Union del Barrio, trade unionists, Central America activists from CISPES, people from BAYAN and others.

It is in the interest of all progressive organizations and individuals to set the example for the movement of building nonsectarian alliances with all who have an interest in abolishing capitalism.

We need to recruit and build our branches, while at the same time being engaged in the defensive struggles of our class. We should understand that it's the movements of the most oppressed hit the hardest by the ruling class today that will lead our class into revolution. □

WW PHOTO: ALAN POLLOCK

Michigan State University

Students take over president's office to demand action against rape

By Megan Spencer
East Lansing, Mich.

The Coalition Against Sexual Violence at Michigan State University held a rally outside the Hannah Administration Building Nov. 19. Dozens of students and community supporters demanded that administrators speak out against sexual violence on campus and take action regarding past assaults, particularly the case of two MSU Spartans men's basketball players who were accused of raping a woman student in late August and who remain on the basketball team. The coalition was promised a meeting with MSU officials weeks ago, but administrators failed to follow through.

After reading a statement detailing the culture of rape and misogyny on MSU's campus and calling out the administration for its lack of action, student activists read a list of nine demands that the university must meet. Among them was the demand to match men's basketball coach Tom Izzo's recent pay raise of \$500,000 with a fund for sexual assault prevention

and education.

The coalition is demanding a new educational campaign against sexual violence and victim-blaming, as well as demanding that university administrators issue a public apology to the survivor and all survivors for the administration's failure to act and speak out against sexual violence.

After students finished reading the demands, demonstrators began chanting "Silence is betrayal!" and stormed the steps of the administration building to stage a sit-in inside MSU President Lou Anna K. Simon's office.

Hoisting posters, activists chanted and occupied Simon's office for nearly 20 minutes before an administrator offered to meet with students in the nearby board room. Because of the constant militant chanting, police were unable to order the demonstrators to vacate the premises.

During the meeting with the president's diversity advisor and the vice president of the university, students voiced their concerns and outrage over the lack of consequences for acts of sexual violence. They also expressed dissatisfaction with cur-

rent education programs that seem to be ineffective, given the high number of sexual assaults on campus.

The meeting, which went on for more than an hour, ended with a plan to hold another meeting between students and the university, with the administrators promising to contact the coalition within a week.

The militant action was the top news story on WLNS TV 6 in Lansing. Workers World newspapers were distributed to the participants. □

MICHIGAN

Protests beat back bigots

Hateful bigots from Fred Phelps' Westboro Baptist Church in Topeka, Kan., were met by protests on Nov. 18 when they visited several Michigan cities. The group is rabidly anti-gay/lesbian/bi/trans/queer and infamous wherever they travel throughout the U.S. with their message of hate. They often target the funerals of rank-and-file U.S. soldiers killed in Iraq or Afghanistan, blaming their deaths on LGBTQ people.

In Detroit about 50 counterprotesters gathered near Wayne State University. At a high school in East Lansing, Mich., some 600 overwhelmed the handful of bigots 100 to 1. The counterprotesters divided into two camps. While 450 held a



WW PHOTO: KRIS HAMEL



church-sponsored picket several blocks away, a counterinsurgency of 150 strong rushed the WBC front line and overwhelmed the Phelps group with louder voices and strength in numbers.

The bigots were visibly shaken by the militant crowd. A threatened protest by the WBC at a GI's funeral later that day in Marine City, Mich., did not materialize.

— Report and photo by Alan Pollock

say why they won't spend bailout on the workers

By Paul Wilcox

5. Why produce more stuff when we already have much more stuff than we could possibly use?
6. Why hire workers to make more stuff when they can't afford to buy the stuff they make? There's no profit in that, so what's the point?
7. The problem really is China, Iran, Brazil, India, Pakistan, Greenland, Japan, Germany, Gilligan's Island and other countries.

8. Other countries just don't seem to do what we tell them to do any more. For some reason, they seem to think they have rights too.
9. Good thing our working class doesn't think that way ... we hope.
10. So all this job talk is waaaaaay overrated.

Email: pwilcox@workers.org

Stop the attacks on workers of all ages

Following are excerpts from the Nov. 13 talk given at the Workers World Party national conference, by Phebe Eckfeldt, a leader of the Boston branch and a representative of the Harvard Union of Technical and Clerical Workers, AFSCME Local 3650.

We will all grow older. It's the dialectics of nature. Some of us haven't thought about this prospect yet. Others are starting to ponder it. Many are there already, accepting it or not.

Shouldn't workers have the right to look forward to retirement? Playing with grandchildren, traveling, sleeping late, pursuing long-forgotten interests and organizing against injustice. Aging under capitalism can be terrifying, life threatening, demeaning and degrading. Older workers are expendable, costly and unprofitable; many are being pushed out, laid off and fired.

An Obama-administration-appointed commission just proposed raising the Social Security qualification age to 69, which would rob workers of funds they have earned and deserve.

Marxism explains that employed workers produce a greater value than they receive back in wages. If one works a seven-hour day and produces enough in four hours to equal one's wages, the next three hours are unpaid; the boss gets these for free. This is "surplus value."

Bosses' profits are directly proportional to workers' unpaid labor. If workers are paid more for their labor, as longer-term workers generally are, the bosses' profits are lowered proportionally. Wage or benefits' reductions means bosses get more free labor time. Benefits like health



WW PHOTO: ALAN POLLOCK

Phebe Eckfeldt

insurance, pensions, paid sick and vacation days are deferred wages that belong to the workers.

Harvard University union activists are fighting against management's campaign to drive out older workers, which began after the big-bank-run Harvard Corporation lost billions in endowment funds after the stock market crashes.

To increase profits, Harvard has laid off workers, many of them older and many women. In one department three older women workers were laid off and replaced with three younger white men. Other workers, afraid of pending layoffs, felt forced to take retirement plans that they could barely live on. They thought part-time jobs would supplement their incomes, but that became nearly impossible, due to the depression.

Harvard brings in new managers to slash costs by driving out older workers. They use a tactic of tracking errors or using accuracy rates, telling workers their work must be 95 percent to 100 percent accurate. The manager decides what constitutes an "error," how the errors are measured, and on whom an error is imposed. They target disabled workers, union representatives and senior, long-time workers.

These rates are impossible to meet because the rules constantly change and are a trap. By tracking a worker's every move, by micromanaging and harassing, the work environment becomes hostile and stressful, sometimes leading workers to quit or be fired. A disabled man with eyesight problems was run out in this way, and so was a 30-year employee.

The managers who are brought in to get rid of workers are aptly described in Fred Goldstein's book, "Low-Wage Capitalism": "An office clerk may wear the same white collar as a manager whose job it is to see that the clerk gives every last minute of labor time to the boss. The clerk has sold her or his labor power to the boss and the supervisor is there to see that this labor power is as thoroughly exploited as possible. The superficiality of the category 'white collar' will be revealed the moment the clerk and other workers demand a raise, try to organize a union, or go on strike."

Harvard aims to drive out older workers and replace them with young workers, paying them one-half or one-third of a senior worker's salary. Management super-exploits young workers who work the same hours but produce more as they are required to know and use many computer programs. Because most young people are very knowledgeable about computers, one worker can do the same amount of work as two or three workers did years ago.

Harvard is violating the union contract, which states that laid-off workers, mostly older, must be given first preference in hiring, but management turns away many qualified senior applicants to hire younger workers. Harvard's attempt to drive a wedge between older and younger workers is insidious.

However, to management's dismay, there is strong solidarity between younger and senior workers, among union activists on campus and from students. This bodes well for future struggles.

We look to the solidarity among French workers of different ages in their militant struggles for pensions. The youth will show the way. Together, let's expropriate the expropriators. □

Invasive airport body searches elicit mass anger

By Bryan G. Pfeifer

A firestorm of protest and resistance is erupting across the U.S. in response to the Transportation Security Administration's ongoing implementation of body scanners and invasive body searches.

On Nov. 11 the Council on American Islamic Relations issued "a travel advisory for airline passengers who may be subjected to new Transportation Security Administration 'enhanced pat-downs'" that many who undergo the procedure describe as invasive and humiliating. (www.cair.com)

The advisory comes after two of the country's largest pilots' unions urged commercial pilots to avoid both full-body scanners and public pat-downs. "Pilots have compared the pat-downs to 'sexual molestation.' A flight attendants union has expressed similar concerns," continued the CAIR statement.

Under TSA procedures implemented Oct. 29 a passenger can be summoned to go through the body scanner or "opt-out" and be subjected to the invasive body search. Passengers refusing both won't be allowed to proceed to their boarding gate.

Passengers refusing to have their constitutional and human rights violated are being harassed, menaced and threatened with fines and arrests. In Florida a woman refusing to be body searched was reportedly handcuffed to a chair, surrounded by a dozen police and TSA officials, and had her ticket torn up.

The new scanners take a revealing full-body X-ray viewed on a monitor. Though TSA claims that the images can't be stored, saved or transmitted and that they are deleted immediately after an official views them, this is contested. The body searches have been equated to sexual assault because TSA workers are forced to touch thighs, breast and groin areas of passengers searching for weapons.

Passengers and airline workers report being traumatized by the searches, especially those who have been raped or sexually assaulted or who watch loved ones, especially children, being groped and fondled. The pat-downs particularly concern the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer community because searches will be done using a same-sex procedure based on what the TSA official thinks a passenger's gender is.

Protests have stepped up as the TSA, an agency within the Department of Homeland Security, hurries to get more body scanners in place for the holiday seasons. There are now 385 scanners at 68 airports in the U.S. The goal is to install 450 by the end of 2010 and 500 in 2011.

U.S. 'security' a multibillion dollar bonanza

The U.S.-based "security" industry, like private contractors used in U.S. imperialist wars, is a multibillion dollar industry.

Former Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff heads the Chertoff Group, a security "consulting" firm formed in 2009. In a CNN interview Dec. 30, 2009, Chertoff admitted he has at least one client manufacturing full-body scanners. The first five body scanners purchased by the federal government from Rapiscan were in 2005 when Chertoff was HS Secretary.

In 2009 the TSA purchased 150 more machines from Rapiscan with \$25 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds. The use of scanners increased rapidly in 2010 as the federal government and security firms like Chertoff's took advantage of the 2009 "Christmas Day Incident" (an alleged attempted bombing of a Detroit-bound flight from Amsterdam) to make profits.

Chertoff and other security CEOs aren't subject to body scanners and invasive searches because they fly on private jets or government-owned aircraft.

Under the racist guise of "fighting terrorism" after 9/11, Arabs and Muslims traveling to and from the U.S. are subject to racial profiling at transportation portals. As the economic depression makes it clearer that banks and corporations are the real threat, the repressive state apparatus casts an ever-wider net of oppression over broader segments of the population. In poor and oppressed communities it's a daily occurrence.

Resistance growing

In a message to the US Airways Pilots Association, Captain Mike Cleary called the pilots' stance against the scanners and pat-downs a "fight to restore the dignity we deserve. ... We are not the enemy and we will not stand for being treated as such before each duty period." (abcnews.go.com, Nov. 9) The union is also protesting because of unknown levels of radia-

tion the scanners may be emitting.

Others protesting the new TSA procedures include the Association of Flight Attendants-Communication Workers Local 66, the ACLU and individual passengers who are increasingly refusing the TSA's new procedures and starting blogs and websites to spread word of resistance. Some are calling for an opt-out day on Nov. 24 when passengers would refuse body scans and instead request a search to clog or slow down airports during the busy holiday season.

The widespread resistance has forced the TSA to backpedal a bit, and even Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and President Barack Obama have issued statements. But to totally stop the body scanning and invasive searches, increasing resistance by travelers and workers like Michael Roberts is needed.

A pilot for ExpressJet Airlines, Roberts refused being body scanned and searched at Memphis International Airport on Oct. 22. He told CNN Nov. 9, " ... they're not just patting people's arms and legs; they're grabbing and groping and prodding pretty aggressively. I was trying to avoid this assault on my person, and I'm not willing to have images of my nude body produced for some stranger ... to look at either." □

Labor, parents support special needs children

Shop stewards, who are members of Amalgamated Transit Local 1181-1061, showed solidarity with parents of special needs children on Nov. 18. The stewards, who are from two New York City school bus companies, attended the Citywide Council on Special Education meeting that evening.

Parents to Improve School Transportation invited the union stewards who joined parents, school staff members and disability advocates in confronting the guest speaker at the CCSE meeting, Matt Berlin, who is the director of the Office of Pupil Transportation.

PIST has been organizing against the denial of educational rights to thousands of children who are placed on bus routes

that make them miss many hours of instruction and needed therapies.

The bus driver representatives explained that OPT sets up the overcrowded buses by routinely cutting more than 300 routes at the start of each school year. Then OPT waits until there are complaints and new students are enrolled before restoring the appropriate number of routes.

Each driver described ways that management puts them in an unfair position where they have to follow the written route, instead of doing what they know is sensible and kind to the children — or else they risk expensive fines.

The community appreciated their presence. For more information, visit www.pistnyc.org.

— Sara Catalinotto

Fighting racism builds class unity

Following are excerpts from a Nov. 13 talk at the Workers World Party national conference given by Monica Moorehead, member of the WW Secretariat, a WW managing editor and editor of “Marxism, Reparations and the Black Freedom Struggle.”

This unprecedented global capitalist economic crisis is devastating the lives of workers not only in the poorer, developing countries but also in the rich, capitalist countries including the U.S. Almost daily some study is released on how workers are being impacted by unemployment, underemployment, home foreclosures, debt, lack of education and health care, attacks on pensions. The list goes on and on.

Just reading all these statistics can easily be a downer and a source of tremendous demoralization and desperation, especially for the masses who right now see no way out of this morass. But for the movement it should have an opposite effect because as Marxists, our duty and responsibility is not just to interpret and analyze the world’s problems but to change them. Revolutionaries must be part of the solution, not part of the problem.

The experts never view these deteriorating conditions within the general framework of the decadent, archaic nature of the capitalist system, which is driven insanely to make profits at the expense of providing human needs.

The workers, as exploited wage slaves, continue to be a tremendous source of profits for the corporate bosses. This exploitation has laid the basis for globalized solidarity as the growing poverty in the capitalist countries is moving quickly in the same direction as the poverty in

the oppressed countries.

But because oppressed nations or people of color exist inside imperialist countries based on centuries-old super-exploitation and the white supremacist attitudes that flow from it, there is a greater degree of suffering in disproportionate numbers among people of color that cannot be ignored. There has been a lot written about the plight of African Americans and the current economic crisis. Consider these devastating numbers: The richest 1 percent of the U.S. population owns close to 40 percent of its wealth. The top 25 percent of U.S. households own 87 percent.

A recent Brandeis University study shows that a white family has five times more wealth than a Black family, amounting to a difference of about \$95,000.

In a recent CNN documentary called “Almighty Debt: Black in America,” it was stated that 81 percent of Black college graduates have outstanding loans. One out of 10 Black families is losing their homes to foreclosure due mainly to the predatory subprime loans which singled out Black single mothers.

According to the Graduate Employment Gap: Students of Color Losing Ground report, the unemployment rate for 16-to-24-year-old African-American high school graduates increased 11 points since the beginning of the recession in 2007 to 31.3 percent. The unemployment rate for white high school graduates, at 21.4 percent, is the lowest among Black, Latino/a and Asian graduates. African-American college graduates have an unemployment rate of 15.4 percent, up from 8.4 percent at the beginning of the recession. Almost twice as many Black workers are unemployed compared to whites.

Chess-playing while Black in NYC

By Dee Knight
New York

The right to play chess in a public space became the focus of community organizing in northern Manhattan’s Inwood Hill Park over the past month when arbitrary actions by police angered many.

On Nov. 20 a multinational group of parents, children and other residents rallied in the park’s Emerson Playground to support seven African-American men who were ticketed by police in October for teaching children how to play the board game.

During the protest, Parks Department workers installed picnic tables in another area of the park for playing chess. However, they aren’t specially designed for playing chess. The park’s only stone chess and backgammon tables are situated in Emerson Playground where they are separated from the children’s play area by a fence.

This is where the chess players were on Oct. 20 when “the police rolled up on us like we were drug dealers,” said 49-year-old Y. A. Harrison, one of those who received a summons. (newyorkdailynews.com, Nov. 18) He said he and the other players regularly showed kids how to play the game on Saturdays.

“If we were teaching them to pitch pennies and gamble, that’s one thing,” Harrison said. “But this is chess. We weren’t trying to add to the problem.”

A police spokesperson claimed that officers were responding to residents’ complaints and that they were following New York City Parks Department rules, which

bar adults from the playground if they are not accompanying minors. The summonses, reported at DNAinfo.com, cited the men for failing to obey park regulation signs. They must appear in Manhattan Criminal Court on Dec. 28.

News of the tickets and upcoming court date were met by outrage at police actions by many community members who sympathized with the ticketed chess players.

Zaida Grunes, a mother of twins whose 17-year-old son learned to play chess in the same place where the men were ticketed, wrote in the “Manhattanspeak” blog on Nov. 18, “When my toddler twins are old enough, I will be sending them to Inwood Hill Park, alone, and hope that there is a caring, attentive individual sitting at a chess table, willing to give my kids their time and patience to teach them not only a game, but a skill.”

Inwood parent Jackie Rodriguez-Jones said she was incensed over the situation and planned to do what she could to support the players. “This is about people. People who did nothing wrong. People that the community sees and passes by them ... people who need to know their community is aware and concerned for them,” she wrote on her Facebook page. (dnainfo.com, Nov. 19)

The Inwood neighborhood is home to a multinational working-class community, but gentrification is affecting the area, with wealthier residents along with police aiming to push poor people out of parks and other public areas.

Everyone has the right to use a public park, and that right must be defended. □



WW PHOTO: ALAN POLLOCK

Monica Moorehead

This current crisis for Black people is rooted in the legacy of slavery, the counterrevolution known as the demise of Reconstruction, Jim Crow and current institutionalized racism.

This economic crisis has caused a political crisis as well, especially since the 2008 election of President Obama. Millions of people, especially people of color and young people, were hoping that the election of the first African-American president would be the answer to good-paying jobs, the eradication of racism and the end of endless war. But just the opposite has happened — the economic assaults have intensified and so have racism and other forms of reaction. President Obama, like every president before him

whether Democrat or Republican, serves the interests of the bourgeoisie, since the U.S. president is the head administrator of the capitalist state who must maintain class rule.

In “Almighty Debt,” the intervention of the Black churches was raised as a viable solution to foreclosures and layoffs. Our party would certainly support any source of immediate economic relief. But this kind of relief is like a bandage trying to cover a growing cancer. It’s not the ultimate solution.

No matter how many trillions of dollars the government hands over to the banks in bailouts, the present capitalist crisis will remain permanent. Capitalism cannot be reformed. The capitalists are appendages to an irrational system, not the other way around. Capitalism must be uprooted tooth and nail.

All revolutionaries must put aside all ideological differences to unite to build a united front for socialism, a system that puts peoples’ needs before profits. The material conditions are more than ripe to do this. What is missing is the political will to do this. Unity is crucial to reaching our class sisters and brothers in an effective way with a political program of fight-back and struggle. Oppressed workers are taking bold actions like the immigrant-led sit-in by the Republic Windows and Doors workers in 2008, which won back wages for them. Black Workers for Justice and UE 150 are organizing public sector workers in the low-wage, racist state of North Carolina, and the Black-led ILWU Local 10 recently shut down the docks on the West Coast to protest the police killing of Black youth Oscar Grant.

Help us to abolish capitalism! Help us to build a socialist future! Help us to build a Workers World! □

Committee to Stop FBI Repression is calling for Nationally coordinated actions Nov. 29-Dec. 4

The Committee to Stop FBI Repression continues to denounce the FBI raids on activists in the Midwest on Sept. 24 and to demand an end to the grand jury witch-hunt. The warrants and subpoenas clearly violate people’s First Amendment rights to freedom of association — by demanding materials like address books and information regarding “recruitment and indoctrination” to anti-war, solidarity and other political organizations. This kind of sweeping investigation and grand jury witch-hunt is a dangerous precedent for all people of conscience.

NEW YORK CITY

Flashmobs for Jobs demand extended benefits

Continued from page 1

during the holiday season. The 99ers organization, Flashmobs for Jobs, includes any unemployed. They have stepped up their struggle, which included a Nov. 12 protest that led to some members being arrested for blocking traffic.

The courage shown on the bread-line was very strong. A crowd of people stopped to watch, curious about this struggle. As the demonstrators were chanting and walking around in front of the Federal Reserve, you could tell that in everyone’s life there was a story of hard-

ship and struggle. Even on the very cold morning, everyone was all smiles when they finally realized that their voices were really being heard.

The next rally will be held on Nov. 30 at 5:30 pm at Rockefeller Center during the tree-lighting ceremony. Demonstrators will say the working class is fed up with trillions of dollars being spent on war, and they want their benefits back now! Rockefeller Center is owned by General Electric, a giant war profiteer. Please join us in solidarity against the government ignoring the needs of the unemployed.

Memorial meeting celebrates Lolita Lebrón's life

By John Catalinotto
New York

People packed the lecture auditorium at Hunter College in New York on Nov. 20 to take part in a celebration of the life of Puerto Rican independence heroine Lolita Lebrón, who died earlier this year at the age of 90. Many Puerto Rican and other Latino and Latina activists who live in New York or nearby were present. Lebrón had spent part of her youth in the city. There were also representatives of U.S.-based organizations that support independence for Puerto Rico on the basis of self-determination.

There have always been pro-independence activities and organizations of Puerto Ricans in New York, which was reflected in the strong turnout for the meeting.

Lebrón's defining action was her leadership role in an armed attack by a group of four Puerto Rican independence fighters from the Nationalist Party on the U.S.

House of Representatives in 1954. The aim of the attack was to bring the issue of Puerto Rico's colonial status before the world. Arrested and sentenced to prison, she then spent more than 25 years behind bars before being released in 1979. She continued her participation in the struggle until the end (see workers.org for a more complete history of her accomplishments).

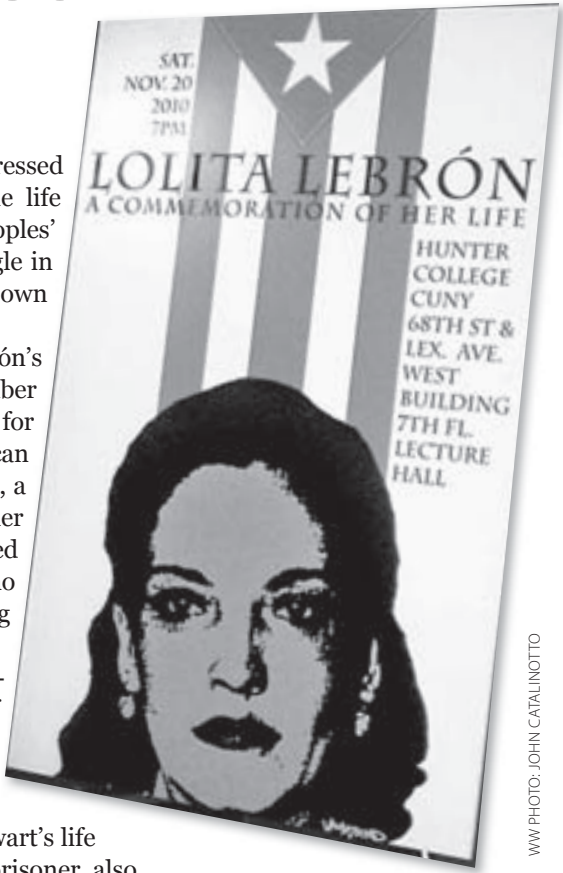
The speakers included women political leaders who were close to Lolita Lebrón and whose lives were shaped by their relationship with or admiration for the independence leader. The overwhelming message from talks, poems, songs and images was that Lolita Lebrón will live on as long as there is one Puerto Rican — and perhaps one Cuban or one Venezuelan — who fights on for liberty and sovereignty against the imperialist colossus centered in Washington.

Representatives from the Cuban Mission to the United Nations and from the Venezuelan Consulate in New York also

addressed the audience and expressed not only their appreciation for the life of Lolita Lebrón, but also their peoples' solidarity with the liberation struggle in Puerto Rico, which they felt as their own struggle.

Among the speakers were Lebrón's niece, Linda Alonso Lebrón, a member of the Secretariat of the Commission for Women's Affairs in the Puerto Rican Nationalist Party, and Dylcia Pagán, a former Puerto Rican political prisoner or "prisoner of war," the preferred term for those freedom fighters who have been captured while defending their country.

A strong delegation from Workers World Party attended, many of whom had come from an afternoon demonstration in solidarity with another political prisoner, attorney Lynne Stewart. Ralph Poynter, Stewart's life partner and also a former political prisoner, also attended the meeting for Lebrón. □



WWW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

26 activists arrested as

Thousands demand School of the Americas' closing

Thousands, mostly youth, amassed at the gates of Ft. Benning, Ga., on Nov. 20 and 21, to demand the closing of the School of the Americas, known throughout Latin America as the School of the Assassins. Activists briefly blocked the road with a sign that read, "Stop: This is the End of the Road for the SOA."

Twenty-six activists were arrested and face multiple charges. Police followed rally

participants leaving the area, indiscriminately arresting people who had committed no crime nor engaged in civil disobedience. Three journalists filming the police abuse were also arrested. Two activists who crossed onto the fort were charged with federal trespass and face up to six months in prison and fines up to \$5,000.

Over the decades of its existence, scores of military personnel trained by the U.S.

at the SOA have been involved in numerous coups, massacres and assassinations. Charges of torture, false imprisonment and other forms of repression continue to be leveled against SOA graduates.

The recent overthrow of the democratically elected president of Honduras and the attempted coup against the president of Ecuador are linked to U.S.-trained military members.

The movement to close the SOA has grown over the years to include major unions such as the United Auto Work-

ers, whose president, Bob King, spoke at Saturday's rally. The presence of faith-based organizations, Palestine supporters, anti-war activists, veterans' groups, immigrants, artists, musicians and students from dozens of campuses characterizes the broad support for this demand. Solidarity actions took place in cities across the U.S. and around the world in response to a call from the School of the Americas Watch, organizers of this campaign.

For more information, go to www.soaw.org.

— Dianne Mathiowetz

In solidarity with Colombian trade unionists

UAW supports Coca-Cola boycott

Over 120 labor activists met at the Convention Center in Columbus, Ga., before going to the rally at the gates of the School of the Americas on Nov. 20. They came from Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Georgia, Michigan, Florida, the District of Columbia, Massachusetts, Maryland, Alabama and New York, and represented a variety of service, construction, manufacturing, public sector and educational unions. Many students were also in the meeting.

The largest delegation was from the United Auto Workers. International President Bob King addressed the meeting and was the featured labor speaker at the afternoon rally. King announced that the UAW was now fully behind the Coca-Cola boycott and that all UAW halls and buildings would soon be Coke-free.

The UAW showed a video about its participation over the years in the protests outside the SOA. Videographer and retired UAW Local 909 President Frank Hammer stated that repression can also occur in the U.S. itself, as evidenced by the recent FBI attacks on progressive activists on Sept. 24. North Carolina activist Kosta Harlan spoke about his recent harassment by the FBI and pointed out that many of those targeted are labor activists.

Ray Rogers, organizer and founder of the Campaign to Stop Killer Coke, introduced a former Coke worker from Guatemala, José Armando Palacios. Palacios had to seek asylum in the U.S. after Coke had thugs invade his home and hold a gun



to his nine-year-old daughter. A coworker of his saw his son and nephew murdered, and his daughter was gang-raped.

"I have decided not to keep my mouth shut," he said. Other speakers included SOAWatch Latin America Project Coordinator Lisa Sullivan and Alfonso Mayfield, president of the Florida SEIU Public Service Workers.

The featured speaker was Álvaro Francisco Morales Sánchez, second vice president of FECODE, the Colombian teachers union. He said that while we have to take on the SOA, we also have to take on "the intellectual authors of all of this killing," whom he identified as the U.S. banks and corporations. "The empire can be destroyed," Morales said. "It is a colossus with feet of clay."

— Martha Grevatt

Transgender Day of Remembrance Commemorated

By Kris Hamel
East Lansing, Mich.

Transgender Day of Remembrance was marked Nov. 20 and the preceding week by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people and their allies in the U.S. and around the world. The day commemorates and honors the many transgender people who have been killed because their gender expression did not conform to a bigoted society's expectations.

At Michigan State University a series of activities, including film showings and an art exhibit, took place Nov. 16-20 to commemorate TDOR. An outdoor candlelight vigil and reflection on the lives lost due to gender-based violence, sponsored by Transaction, the LBGT Resource Center and Edgewood United Church of Christ, was held the evening of Nov. 19. Names of the dead and their manner of death were somberly read. Short, heartfelt speeches followed in the cold night.

It is important, one of the speakers

noted, that LGBTQ communities continue to struggle alongside their allies for full rights, equality and respect for all LGBTQ people, so that these types of memorials can become a thing of the past.

TDOR is held in November to honor Rita Hester, whose murder on Nov. 28, 1998, was the impetus for the "Remembering Our Dead" Web project and a San Francisco candlelight vigil in 1999. Like most murder cases of transgender people, Hester's murder has yet to be solved. (rememberingourdead.org)

According to Roslyn Manley, 100 transgender deaths were recorded in the U.S. in 2009: "These include only those who are known ... by direct community reporting or newspaper accounts. There are undoubtedly more. Years ago, researcher Kay Brown calculated the transgender murder rate to be 16 times that of the general population and three times that of African-American men, the next closest group." (ucccoalition.org) □

LOW-WAGE CAPITALISM

What the new globalized high-tech imperialism means for the class struggle in the U.S.

An easy-to-read analysis of the roots of the current global economic crisis, its implications for workers and oppressed peoples, and the strategy needed for future struggle.

The author is available for lectures & interviews. Lowwagecapitalism.org

"With the capitalist system demonstrably unfair, it is useful, indeed refreshing, to see a Marxist analysis of globalization and its effects on working people. Fred Goldstein does exactly that."
— Howard Zinn, author of
A People's History of the United States

Available from Leftbooks.com
and bookstores around the country

NATO summit plans for continued aggressions

By Gene Clancy

Helicopter gunships patrolled the skies, missile launcher ships were anchored in the Tagus estuary, and police with heavy machine guns and armored cars were deployed on the main streets. Heads of state and government of the 28 NATO member countries were cloistered in the Parque das Nações, a part of Lisbon that had been turned into a top-security area similar to Baghdad's "Green Zone."

The rather sinister gathering's original purpose had been to discuss how to withdraw NATO troops from Afghanistan beginning in July 2011, a target which most of the allies present favored. Shortly before the meeting, however, Washington abruptly announced that the 2011 date was being "de-emphasized." Despite President Barack Obama's promise last year, troops would stay in Afghanistan until at least 2014.

Another summit goal was to reevaluate NATO's "strategic concept." The North Atlantic Treaty Organization was originally set up in 1949 to prevent workers' revolutions in Western Europe and to threaten the Soviet Union. Since the 1990s, while still maintaining a hostile stance towards the Russian Federation, NATO expanded its aggressive mission to intervene first in Yugoslavia, and then in Afghanistan.

Now, it is officially updating its strat-

egy — making Lisbon, in the words of Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen, "one of the most important summits in NATO's history." (globalpost.com, Nov.19)

Shortly before the summit began, Rasmussen told Britain's Daily Telegraph newspaper that NATO had to be prepared for expeditionary warfare even beyond Afghanistan: "But we must realize," he said, "that in the modern world we have to go beyond our borders to actually protect and defend our borders." (globalpost.com Nov. 19)

Some of the imperialist powers at the Lisbon Summit expressed tactical differences. France's new defense minister, Alain Juppé, said flatly this week that Afghanistan is a "trap" for allied troops. Some analysts see a very grim scenario for imperialism in Central Asia. "Success in Afghanistan is almost impossible," said Shmuel Bar, a director at the Institute of Policy and Strategy in Herzliya, Israel. "If NATO is making its future contingent on victory in Afghanistan, they are not living in the real world." (Boston Globe, Nov. 18)

Meanwhile, in Afghanistan, President Hamid Karzai, the leader of the U.S. puppet government, stunned U.S. officials by demanding that the U.S.-NATO forces should take a "lower profile" and "reduce the visibility and intensity of their military operations. The time has come to

reduce military operations," Karzai said. (Washington Post, Nov. 18)

Despite Karzai's statement, on Nov. 20 the Pentagon announced that it would ratchet up its aggression by sending huge, heavily armored Abrams tanks into the battle against the Afghan resistance, a first for the U.S. military in that country. It is another step up in the U.S. and NATO assault on the Afghan people.

The U.S. nuclear threat

Fearing a decline of solidarity among the NATO members, the U.S. came up with a rather bizarre mechanism: a missile shield over Europe. The alleged enemy in this scenario is Iran, although Iran is not mentioned specifically because of objections from the Turkish government. In reality, it is a slap in the face to the Russian Federation. A similar proposal to put missiles in Poland near the end of the Bush administration led to icy relations with the Russian government, which perceived that the so-called shield was directed against it.

Only a day before NATO announced the missile shield, the Republican leadership of the U.S. Senate indicated that it might refuse to ratify a recently negotiated nuclear arms treaty with Russia (New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty). Some pundits have speculated that the Republicans merely want to deny Obama a po-

litical victory. It appears, however, that there is a deeper political division within the U.S. ruling class over the issue of arms reduction which cuts across political party lines.

The Pentagon's intelligence organizations, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Secretary of Defense Gates have called for the treaty to be ratified as soon as possible. They point out that the treaty would permit U.S. inspections of Russian military sites to resume, while minimally limiting the U.S. deployment of missiles and nuclear weapons.

According to Paula DeSutter, an assistant secretary of state in the Bush administration, the absence of a U.S.-Russian arms control treaty would mean that the U.S. would need to focus more spy satellites over Russia, satellites that otherwise could be used to peer on other sites such as Iraq and Afghanistan. (Washington Times, Nov. 18) In other words, the Pentagon wants the START treaty ratified, not to promote peace and disarmament, but in order to more efficiently utilize its military resources to carry out wars of aggression and occupation in Afghanistan and other parts of the Middle East.

Just where the U.S. and NATO will get the money to pay for all these new missile shields, nuclear weapons and spy satellites is another subject avoided by both the NATO summit and the U.S. Senate. □

30,000 protest NATO Summit in Lisbon

Some 30,000 people marched through central Lisbon on Nov. 20 to protest the NATO Summit in the Portuguese capital, where leaders of European and North American imperialist powers were plotting to use their military forces — which are responsible for two-thirds of the global resources spent on war and preparations for war — to police the world to serve the interests of finance capital.

Hundreds of anti-war, anti-imperialist, trade union and other progressive organizations throughout Portugal, with support from groups throughout Europe, sponsored the protest. Its main slogans were "Peace yes, NATO no!" "NATO out of Portugal" and "End NATO." The main Portuguese trade union federation, CGTP-IN, which participated in strength in the protest, is also preparing a general strike for Nov. 24 to fight the government's austerity program.

— John Catalinotto



PHOTO: JORGE FIGUEIREDO

Banner calls Portugal's president and prime minister 'servants of death' and demands an 'end to NATO.' Flag at upper left demands freedom for U.S. political prisoner, Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Rebellion against occupation: U.S., U.N. & cholera out of Haiti!

Continued from page 1

infected with cholera died overnight, we had a spontaneous mobilization to bring the whole neighborhood into the movement. A few blocks from here, another demonstration ended in a confrontation with the riot squad. A police station was burned and Minustah began firing tear gas. We defended ourselves by throwing rocks and building barricades."

He continues, "We organized a mass meeting to discuss the significance of our independence gained Nov. 18, 1802, in the current context. Because Haiti is still occupied by foreign powers and by the U.N., which they direct." (observers.france24.com, Nov. 19)

Minustah claimed that six of its soldiers were injured and that armed protesters fired on troops in Quartier Morin, on the outskirts of Cap-Haïtien. Two Haitians were killed, one protester and a

passerby. Also, 19 people were injured in Cap-Haïtien. Fifteen people were shot at with bullets.

"We'd rather die from bullets than be decimated by the cholera epidemic," Cap-Haïtien protesters shouted, while throwing rocks at the Minustah base. (AlterPresse, Nov. 15)

French TV5 on Nov. 18 and videos posted on AlterPresse, a Haitian Internet site, showed groups of 200 to 400 youth confronting Minustah in Port-au-Prince, using the tarp-camp on the Champs des Mars as a base. The Minustah were very aggressive, breaking out and tear gassing crowds of protesters. The youth running and dodging didn't appear willing to leave the streets, except under major pressure.

The videos showed parents grabbing their children when tear gas was shot into their tents, running and dodging through the warren of tents in front of the col-

lapsed National Palace and then ducking their heads in buckets of water to wash the tear gas out of their eyes and hair.

One demonstrator told TV5, "Down with U.S. imperialism! U.N. and its cholera out of Haiti." Another demonstrator angrily said that foreigners want to impose neocolonial slavery on Haiti, turning back the clock before 1804 — the year Haiti proclaimed itself the first Black republic in the Western Hemisphere after a glorious and hard-fought struggle against Napoleon's army.

At a recent forum in Harlem, Ray Laforest, a Haitian-American labor organizer and longtime political activist, called for all progressive forces to support the growing national uprising against the U.N./U.S. occupation of Haiti. This event, held at St. Mary's Church, was sponsored by the Black is Back Coalition and the Harlem Tenants' Council. □



New second edition:

HAITI: A Slave Revolution 200 Years after 1804

Updates book with new material covering 2004-2010. First published in 2004 as a joint project of the International Action Center and the Haiti Support Network. This is not a traditional history book or textbook, but a people's history. In the preface the editors state: "This book is going to combat 200 years of racist indoctrination and propaganda about the Haitian Revolution."

New edition: 272 pp., photos.

Available at www.leftbooks.com

Two tier-wage system & class struggle

New York Times economic analyst Louis Uchitelle’s articles usually appear in the business section. That his Nov. 20 feature wound up on page one means his editors found it especially important.

As with most Times’ articles, this one is slanted to discourage workers from struggling. A Marxist activist reading it, however, might conclude that working-class struggle in the United States is inevitable, a new union leadership is absolutely necessary, and this new leadership must refuse to accept private property and capitalism as permanent. They must instead embrace Marxism, the ideology of class struggle and the need for socialist revolution.

This is the only alternative to workers submitting to a life of grinding poverty. Uchitelle examines the bosses’ strategy of imposing “two-tier” wages in the factories in the industrial region of southeastern Wisconsin. This is where the cities of Milwaukee, Racine, Kenosha and Brookfield are. It’s where 15 percent of the workforce still works in factories and are in unions. It’s also where most of Wisconsin’s African-American population lives.

Most factory workers until recently earned wages and benefits that could provide a family with a home, car, health care and retirement benefits, according to Uchitelle’s numbers.

Factory owners and managers — even at profitable factories — have decided to increase profits even if they must reduce sales. They are consciously cutting labor costs by reducing wages. They do this by hiring “casual workers” at lower wages and no benefits. They impose low wages on new hires.

The new wages are half to three-quarters the existing rate. This disrupts union solidarity, dividing the new and the experienced workers. These wages are too low to allow young women and men to set up a household similar to what their parents could. They create a situation of immediate frustration.

To bludgeon unions into accepting such bad contracts, the bosses threaten to shut the factory or move it, not to China, India or Mexico, but to areas of the U.S. where unions are weaker or nonexistent.

No doubt workers and youth in southwestern Wisconsin want to fight this development. But Uchitelle interviews

the old-line union leadership. They became leaders when the workforce was overwhelmingly white and male, and when anti-Communist laws pushed revolutionaries out of the unions. They see capitalism as permanent, and they accept the ground rules of private property. With workers fearful of losing jobs under conditions of high unemployment, these union leaders have already given up the battle.

WW reporter Martha Grevatt has been writing for the last two years about such conditions already imposed on members of the United Auto Workers at Delphi plants and, under the terms of the 2009 government bailout, on workers at the big three car makers.

Uchitelle implies that capitalists all over the U.S. will adopt this strategy: Cut wages in half, starting with two-tier contracts, and make wage cuts and high unemployment permanent.

Such a strategy undermines the social stability in the U.S. working class that has existed for decades. Even if the decline in wages to near-poverty levels fails to provoke an explosion of struggle, it creates conditions where young workers have no choice but to re-examine the society they face. It is a society that stifles them at every turn.

Only by rejecting the primacy of profits can workers even begin to wage union struggles. Only by developing a leadership that includes more women and more people of color can they represent the most combative workers. Only by expanding beyond the plant can they enlist the forces of other oppressed groupings in the community. Only by going beyond their region can they unite with unorganized workers in parts of the country where the bosses threaten to move. Only by viewing the U.S. workers as a class can they envision a national strike. Only by embracing internationalism can they unite with immigrant workers and understand their common interests with workers around the world.

Only by accepting the goal of ending capitalism and replacing it with socialism can they walk the road to victory.

For a thorough examination of the ideas in this editorial, read the book “Low-Wage Capitalism” by Workers World contributing editor Fred Goldstein.

Musical captures political legacy of Nigerian artist, activist

By Abayomi Azikiwe
Editor, Pan-African News Wire
New York

Over the past two years, the Bill T. Jones and Jim Lewis award-winning Broadway production FELA! has been captivating audiences in New York City. On Nov. 13 another packed house at the Eugene O’Neill Theater sat in utter fascination during the two-and-half-hour musical that depicts the life and times of Fela Anikulapo-Kuti, perhaps the most well-known African composer and musician spanning the 1970s to 1990s. Fela founded Afro-beat music.

The audience was diverse, with expatriate Nigerians and other Africans from the continent, New York residents of all backgrounds and tourists. The musical covered the pioneering and ground-breaking compositions of Fela whose albums sold broadly throughout Africa, Europe and the U.S.

The musical, which won three Tony awards, among others, in 2009, illustrates not only how Fela was shaped by historical forces in Nigeria, as well as the entire region of West Africa, but how his visit to the U.S. in 1969 impacted his social consciousness.

When Fela was in the U.S., he was heavily influenced by the Black revolutionary movement of the period. He was introduced to the struggles waged by the Black Panther Party and others by his close friend Sandra Izsadore of Los Angeles, played in the musical by Saycon Sengbloh. Video footage of the BPP is shown.

This musical immediately grabbed the attention of the audience with the women dancers, known in the musical as queens, moving through the aisles. The actor who played Fela, Kevin Mambo, maintained extensive communication and direct dialogue with the audience.

A full jazz orchestra, reminiscent of Fela’s own Africa 70 and later Egypt 80, started playing some 15 minutes before the curtain rose. These musicians, along with actual recordings of Fela, created a cultural atmosphere. The musical mostly takes place in Fela’s club, The Africa Shrine. On the theater’s walls are photos of Malcolm X, Kwame Nkrumah and projected articles from the Nigerian press during the 1970s.

The musical makes reference to the role that international finance capital such as BP, Shell and the International Monetary Fund has played in super-exploiting the resources and people in Nigeria.

Whether the audience remembered the real Fela or not, the musical is an excellent introduction or reintroduction to one of Africa’s greatest cultural phenomena of the 20th century.

Social significance of Fela’s life

Fela’s life and family history paralleled the anticolonial, national independence and Pan-African struggles in Africa and within the Diaspora. His mother, Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti, was a feminist who fought for the liberation of Nigeria from British imperialism.

Ransome-Kuti was reputed to have been the first woman to drive an automobile in Nigeria. She is also known, as noted in the musical, for traveling to China to meet with Chairman Mao during the height of the revolutionary period in that Asian nation.

Fela’s father was a protestant minister, the Rev. Israel Oludotun Ransome-Kuti. He was an educator and the first president of the Nigerian Union of Teachers. Going back even further, one of Fela’s ancestors was sent to South America during slavery, but later freed himself and returned to Nigeria triumphantly.

Even though Nigeria gained independence from Britain in 1960, the country remained a neocolonial state that moved closer to the U.S. during the 1960s. A secessionist war took place between 1967 and 1970, when the eastern region attempted to break away from the federal republic that was then under military control. The revolt was defeated.

It was the role of the military in Nigeria that drew Fela’s ire. His outspoken criticism of political repression and corruption under military rule resulted in several attempts to prosecute him on trumped-up charges.

After Fela released his world-famous album “Zombie” in 1977, where the army was ridiculed in an extended rhythmic title track that lasted over 25 minutes, the efforts of the military government to silence him accelerated. In 1978 a thousand soldiers surrounded his home in Lagos and later invaded the residence, attacking and assaulting women, destroying and stealing property. The home was burned down by the soldiers.

Funmilayo was living there at the time. She too was assaulted and later thrown out of an upstairs window, resulting in her death. Fela later issued an album about the attacks called “Coffin for a Head of State.”

In 1984 when Fela was set to leave Nigeria on a world concert tour, he was arrested on the airplane and charged with illegal currency possession. He was convicted and spent more than a year in prison.

An international campaign ensued, demanding his release. Eventually he was freed from prison in 1986 and traveled to the U.S. for a series of concerts.

In Detroit in 1986, Fela and Egypt 80 played a three-hour concert at the newly refurbished downtown Fox theater which this writer attended. The concert host Nkenge Zola, a broadcast journalist working at the time at the local affiliate of National Public Radio, who promoted African music, reminded the thousands in attendance that many people had come by the studio in 1985 to sign petitions demanding Fela’s release. Fela traveled to the U.S. two other times — in 1990 and 1991. His last concert in Detroit was in August 1991.

As political repression intensified in Nigeria, Fela was charged with murder by the military government. The charges were baseless, but they prevented him from traveling outside Nigeria to earn a living and to seek medical treatment for his deteriorating health.

Fela died on Aug. 3, 1997, two months shy of his 59th birthday. His funeral was attended by an estimated 1 million people in Lagos.

This production in New York has made a tremendous contribution to contemporary African culture and its relationship to the broader struggle against repression and neocolonialism. This writer hopes the production will go on tour around the U.S. and eventually to the African continent, where it would undoubtedly be well received. FELA! is currently playing in London. □



MUNDO OBRERO

Seguro Social y el Medicare

Continúa de página 12

banco para que usted pudiera jubilarse con seguridad. Pero no, de súbito, es de ellos para jugar con lo que usted pensaba que era suyo.

Éste es un convenio tan injusto, tan criminal, que ni siquiera todos los miembros de este panel, seleccionados cuidadosamente, están de acuerdo.

La representante Jan Schakowski de Illinois está en el panel. Ella sabe que no es necesario recortar los beneficios médicos de las personas de la tercera edad para balancear el presupuesto. Ella no puede respaldar las recomendaciones de Bowles-Simpson y anunció un plan para “mantener los beneficios del Seguro Social intactos, hacer reducciones en el

Pentágono y elevar los impuestos corporativos dirigidos a las ganancias y al pago excesivo de los ejecutivos. . . [Esto] costaría casi \$430 mil millones del déficit en 2015, cumpliendo con la meta de Obama de balancear los gastos e ingresos federales, excepto el interés en la deuda nacional”. (Washington Post, 16 de noviembre)

Ella tiene razón. El dinero está allí para el Seguro Social, el Medicare, y para mucho, mucho más. Hay una riqueza enorme en los Estados Unidos. Ningún beneficio social necesita ser tocado. Pero tomará una lucha masiva de todas las personas afectadas para detener esta ofensiva contra toda la clase trabajadora, una ofensiva que es más cruel contra los miembros más vulnerables. □

The Nobel Peace Prize and Liu Xiaobo

By Deirdre Griswold

Who is Liu Xiaobo and why was he given this year's Nobel Peace Prize? To understand this, it's necessary to know the history of the prize and how it came about.

Alfred Nobel was a Swedish chemist, engineer and the inventor of dynamite, who made a fortune in the 19th century, becoming known as "The Merchant of Death." He willed that his huge fortune be used to set up a number of prizes, one of them for peace.

Nobel decreed that a five-person committee set up by the Norwegian Parliament should pick the recipients of the annual Peace Prize. Norway, a founding member of NATO, today houses several U.S. air bases and has troops in Afghanistan.

The first Nobel Peace Prize was awarded in 1901. Since that time, the people of the world have suffered from devastating wars that together have killed more than 100 million civilians and combatants and laid waste entire countries. The underlying cause of these wars and the rise of the military-industrial complex has been the ravenous appetite of the vying imperialist powers to conquer new markets and territories for superexploitation and profits.

So naturally the people of the world want peace. They come out in demonstrations again and again protesting current wars and new terror weapons. What do the imperialists do about that? They talk peace and democracy while they mobilize

the cannon fodder and money needed for new wars.

Nothing better illustrates this corruption of the popular yearning for peace than the annual Nobel Peace Prize. The prize has been given many times to the very individuals responsible for the horror of imperialist wars.

In 1906 the prize was given to U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt. His slogan, "Speak softly and carry a big stick," fit his own career as leader of the Rough Riders, who stormed into Cuba in 1898 during the Spanish-American War. The war was supposedly to free Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines from Spain, but its real purpose was to bring them under U.S. imperialist domination — as exposed by Mark Twain, a member of the Anti-Imperialist League at the time.

In 1912 the prize went to Elihu Root, who had been secretary of war under Presidents William McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt. Root established neocolonial governments in the three countries mentioned above. He then became president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, set up with money from one of the richest robber baron capitalists and strike breakers of that time, Andrew Carnegie.

In 1919 the Peace Prize went to U.S. President Woodrow Wilson, who had led the U.S. into World War I in 1917 in spite of broad opposition. That same year, a U.S. socialist and leader of the working class, Eugene V. Debs, was sentenced to 10 years under the Sedition Act for having opposed

the war. Debs ran for president from his jail cell in 1920 and got nearly a million votes, but the Nobel committee wouldn't think of giving him the Peace Prize.

In the years that followed, the prize went to such luminaries of U.S. imperialist diplomacy as Cordell Hull (secretary of state during World War II), Gen. George Marshall (Army chief of staff, World War II; secretary of defense, Korean War), Henry Kissinger (secretary of state, Vietnam War), President Jimmy Carter and, last year, President Barack Obama, whose election promise to get U.S. troops out of Afghanistan has been abandoned.

When, facing criticism for ignoring the mass movements against war and ruling-class violence, the Nobel committee did recognize popular figures, it almost always coupled them with enemies of the people. Thus, the prize went jointly to Kissinger and Vietnamese leader Le Duc Tho in 1973 (Tho refused it!); to African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela and apartheid South African President Frederik Willem de Klerk in 1993; and to Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat but also Israelis Shimon Peres and Yitzhak Rabin in 1994.

Once the Cold War began, the Peace Prize was given to figures in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe who facilitated the return of capitalism and imperialism: Andrei Sakharov (1975), Lech Walesa (1983) and Mikhail Gorbachev (1990).

It is in this tradition that the Nobel Peace Prize for 2010 was given to Liu Xiaobo. It is not because Liu is in any way

a man of peace. In fact, he has been an ardent supporter of U.S. wars.

Defending George W. Bush and the war in Iraq, Liu wrote on Oct. 31, 2004, in "The Iraqi War and the U.S. Election," that the U.S. "led the fight against communist totalitarianism in the Vietnam and Korean wars, ... helped Egypt to achieve independence, and has consistently protected Israel, surrounded as it is by Arab nations."

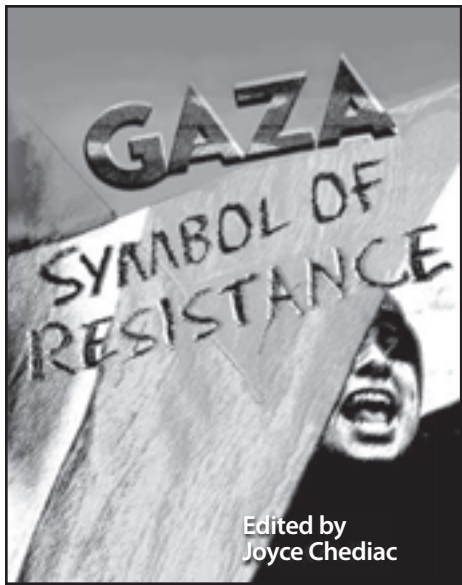
Saying that John Kerry, who ran against Bush in that year's election, condoned "evil governments," Liu added: "In response to existential threats to civilization such as terrorism, the U.S. should not hesitate to use force. Only resolute determination will prevent another 9/11, reduce international terrorism, and reduce the threat of WMDs." (chinastudygroup.net)

How could the Nobel committee even think of giving Liu the Peace Prize, after everything that is known about the Bush administration deliberately deceiving the world about "weapons of mass destruction" in order to invade Iraq?

For the same reasons they chose Sakharov, Walesa and Gorbachev. Liu is a leading advocate for overthrowing the Communist Party of China, privatizing the entire economy, including all the land, and returning China to the arms of the Western imperialists, whom he sees as the great liberators of humanity.

Liu is the main author of Charter 08, which openly declares its counterrevolutionary goals, even as it embellishes them in the language of "democracy" and "human rights" used so deceptively by capitalist bloodsuckers in the West.

Liu is not popular in China. Even those on the left who criticize the government's reliance on the market want nothing to do with him, recognizing him as an enemy of the workers and of China's hard-won sovereignty. He is strictly a creature of imperialism — and of an overblown, completely undemocratic organization that owes its prestige and power to blood money. □



Help to publish—

GAZA: Symbol of Resistance

WW compilations, edited by Joyce Chediak

The compelling story of how Gazans withstood blockade and bombardment only to stand tall, refusing to give up the right to determine their own lives and to choose their own government; how Gaza's courage inspired a worldwide solidarity movement determined to break the blockade and deliver aid; exposes the forces behind the punishment of Gaza, and how a growing people's media is breaking the mainstream media's information blockade on this event. This book will be published in December. Every aspect of production was done by voluntary labor. However, the high cost of printing the book cause us to turn to you for donations. Those who give \$20 or more will receive a copy of the book.

Send check, name and address to **World View Forum**, 55 W. 17th St., 5th floor, NY, NY 10011.

The media and Gaza

A military-industrial-media complex

WW presents here the third installment of "The media and Gaza," a chapter from an upcoming book on the heroic struggle of the Palestinian people of Gaza who are fighting for self-determination.

In 1944, when the U.S. was becoming the dominant power in the Middle East, the U.S. State Department described Middle Eastern oil as "a stupendous source of strategic power, and one of the greatest material prizes in world history."

Washington's assessment of that area has not changed.

"The Middle East, with two thirds of the world's oil and the lowest cost, is still where the prize ultimately lies," said Dick Cheney. This was in 1999, when he was still CEO of Halliburton, the world's second-largest provider of equipment and services to oil and gas companies. Cheney was George H. W. Bush's secretary of defense before his stint at Halliburton and later became George W. Bush's vice president. This is not a coincidence.

"Cheney once drew parallels between his role as CEO of Halliburton and his role as secretary of defense. Addressing the Gulf Coast Association of Geological Societies convention in Corpus Christie in 1998, he stated: "In the oil and gas business, I deal with many of the same people." (CorpWatch, July 25, 2000)

Understanding the needs and wants of the oil companies is a big plus for those aspiring to high government office, since Washington safeguards these needs and wants. Condoleezza Rice prepared for her roles as George W. Bush's national security advisor and then secretary of state by first representing an oil company. She was on Chevron's board of directors and even headed the oil giant's committee on public policy.

Oil companies also mesh with the huge Pentagon apparatus that protects them.

Currently on Chevron's board is Donald Rice, who was Bill Clinton's secretary of the Air Force from 1989 to 1993.

The media monopolies are not far behind, as many have interlocking directors with big oil. General Electric (NBC) interlocks with Mobil, CNN with Chevron, Knight-Ridder with Phillips Petroleum, the New York Times with Texaco (whose parent company is Chevron). And some "public" television news shows are connected to Big Oil through ad revenues. Chevron is a key funder of the most influential show on PBS, the nightly "News Hour with Jim Lehrer." (FAIR, Dec. 19, 2007)

This is why Washington officials, Chevron and the New York Times speak with one voice.

A military-industrial-media complex

Oil companies are not the only U.S. corporations making money hand over fist. Arms sellers are awash in profits. In 2005, for example, the top military contractors had a record \$25 billion to \$30 billion in cash in their coffers. Lockheed Martin, the largest arms seller in the world and the biggest supplier of weapons to Israel, topped the list. (New York Times, May 12, 2005)

There is an incestuous relationship between Big Oil, the weapons makers and the media. Oil companies want a strong military presence in the Middle East to protect them from the people whose resources they exploit. In addition, the military machine that protects oil company interests is itself the largest consumer of oil in the world. And because the media monopolies interlock with both, they are in on the take when both make profits.

How does the military exert its influence on the media?

For one thing, the big media welcome ads from the weapons makers. Lockheed Martin is a major advertiser on CNN,

which is owned by Time-Warner. Boeing is a major funder of PBS's "Washington Week."

Some media are actually owned by arms merchants. NBC's parent company is General Electric. GE Aviation makes the propulsion systems found on U.S. aircraft sold to the Israeli Air Force, including the F-16 Fighting Falcon and F-4 Phantom, the CH-53 heavy lift helicopter, the Apache attack helicopter and UH-60 Black Hawk utility helicopter, as well as the Israeli-made Kfir fighter plane. Some of the attack helicopters GE outfits are used in the occupied territories. GE also makes parts for Hellfire II laser-guided missiles as well as T-700 and 701C jet engines used by the Israeli Defense Forces. (Seattle Palestine Solidarity Committee)

So when reporters, analysts and guest "experts" at NBC find excuses to justify Israel's attack on Gaza, they don't mention that their salaries are paid by a company that makes a mint providing the very weapons that Israel used. NBC doesn't make a cent from exposing the terrible toll these weapons have taken.

Another way the arms makers influence the media is through corporate interlocks with media companies that weld together their interests.

This relationship between media and the military has become such a fixture that it is an integral part of the for-profit capitalist system. Normon Solomon explained that "a military-industrial-media complex ... now extends to much of corporate media. ... Often, media magnates and people on the boards of large media-related corporations enjoy close links — financial and social — with the military industry and Washington's foreign policy establishment." (War Made Easy: How Presidents and Pundits Keep Spinning Us to Death, Norman Solomon, Wiley & Sons, 2005) □

Conferencia nacional: ¡Abajo el capitalismo, luchemos por el socialismo mundial

El movimiento pro derechos de los/as inmigrantes está en una encrucijada

Por Teresa Gutiérrez

Los siguientes son extractos de una charla por Teresa Gutiérrez el 13 de noviembre en la conferencia nacional del Partido Workers World /Mundo Obrero. Gutiérrez es miembro del Secretariado del Partido y líder de la Coalición 1 de Mayo pro derechos de los y las trabajadoras e inmigrantes.

Esta conferencia es histórica ya que tiene lugar en un momento como ninguno en el desarrollo del sistema capitalista. No hay comunista ni organizador/a o con conciencia de clase que se haya enfrentado a lo que nos estamos enfrentando ahora.

El imperialismo y el capitalismo están en un punto único en su desarrollo. Esta es una crisis de todo el sistema. Esta no es la crisis común de auge y caída, sino una crisis sin absolutamente ninguna respuesta al creciente desempleo o a cualquiera de los múltiples problemas que nuestra clase enfrenta aquí y en todo el mundo.

Esta es una crisis con una recuperación sin empleos. ¿Significa esto que no podemos ganar puestos de trabajo en este período? ¡Por supuesto que no! Lo que significa es que tenemos que revivir la lucha de clases, junto con la lucha ideológica, para ganar los puestos de trabajo y los derechos que los y las trabajadoras se merecen, incluyendo la legalización.

El movimiento por los derechos de los/as inmigrantes, al igual que muchos otros, está en una encrucijada. Es un ejemplo de lo urgente que es la necesidad de revivir la lucha ideológica. Los/as activistas deben tomar conciencia de la lucha de clases no solo para sobrevivir, sino para empujar la lucha hacia adelante.

Jon Stewart atacó el marxismo en su obtuso, pero peligroso mitin en Washington. Pero sólo el marxismo proporcionará las herramientas para entender y poner fin a la crisis.

¿De qué otra manera pueden avanzar los/as activistas pro inmigrantes? ¿De qué otra forma podemos analizar las elecciones y su

relevancia en la aprobación de leyes pro-inmigrantes sin una perspectiva de clase?

El voto latino en muchas zonas del país era crucial para las elecciones demócratas. La reelección de Harry Reid es el mejor ejemplo.

Republicanos latinos fueron elegidos en cifras récord. La elección de los anti-inmigrantes Marc Rubio y el gobernador republicano Rick Scott en la Florida hizo que los/as inmigrantes hablaran con gran temor sobre su futuro.

La historia demuestra que no importa quien se encuentra en Washington, sino quien está en las calles luchando.

En Florida, al igual que en otros lugares, se habla de aprobar una legislación similar a la de Arizona. La alarmante implementación de la 287 (g) — la legislación iniciada por Clinton, fortalecida por Bush y ampliada por el Presidente Obama — ha dado lugar a una ola de discriminación racial. Los/as inmigrantes son seleccionados/as para ser arrestados/as sin tener sospecha alguna de haber cometido un crimen. El ser detenido/a por tener una luz trasera rota en su vehículo, o por vender DVDs en una esquina o por una trágica violencia doméstica, puede conducir rápidamente a una deportación.

Es comprensible cómo el temor a la derecha, cómo la retórica racista de los candidatos/as del Partido del Té impulsó a muchos/as a las urnas para votar por el Partido Demócrata. Pero es un retroceso. Los demócratas no han hecho otra cosa más que traicionar al movimiento por los derechos de los/as inmigrantes.

Entonces, ¿qué hacemos? Organizarnos y luchar, eso es lo que hay que hacer. Estos son los pilares del trabajo de nuestro partido, ya sea en coaliciones u organizando manifestaciones.

Nuestro trabajo está guiado por las enseñanzas de Lenin y de Sam Marcy,



WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL

Teresa Gutierrez

nuestro fundador. Entendemos que la autodeterminación y nuestro apoyo a los/as oprimidos/as es parte de todas las luchas. Hay matices y sutilezas en cada coalición. Nos preocupamos por cuándo y cómo se debe criticar y cuándo no hacerlo. Estas son cuestiones importantes que tienen que hacerse bien para poder avanzar en la lucha.

Una de las novedades más debatidas en el movimiento por los derechos de los/as inmigrantes ahora es la ley DREAM por las siglas en inglés de Desarrollo, Alivio y Educación para Menores Extranjeros. Este proyecto de ley introducido en el 2001, proporcionaría a los/as estudiantes indocumentados/as estado legal condicional y eventualmente la ciudadanía si, entre otras cosas, asisten a la universidad o se enlistan en el ejército.

Hay pocas oportunidades de asistir a la universidad; los empleos están escasos. La aprobación de la Ley DREAM se reduce a una herramienta de reclutamiento para las fuerzas armadas imperialistas, es un reclutamiento militar obligatorio de nuestros/as jóvenes inmigrantes. No hay duda al respecto.

Pero nuestro partido y las coaliciones con las que trabajamos han apoyado a los/as estudiantes y jóvenes en este movimiento. ¿Cómo no cuando los/as jóvenes indocumentados/as se han levantado desafiantes declarando: “Soy indocumentado y no tengo miedo”. Después de 10 años de luchar por este proyecto de ley, están muy enojados.

Este es un tema complicado y hasta doloroso. Pero, ¿quién se va a ganar los corazones y las mentes de estos/as jóvenes? ¿Harry Reid? ¡No si estamos envueltos/as en ello!

¿Quién se ganará la lealtad de todos los/as trabajadores/as y los/as oprimidos/as? ¿Quién se encargará de que la clase obrera esté en marcha, no hacia la cabina

de votación, sino en las calles, a Wall Street, al Pentágono y a la Casa Blanca? ¿Quién proporcionará el análisis para las masas mientras se enfrentan al desempleo, a las ejecuciones hipotecarias y a todo lo demás? ¿Quién va a señalar el camino a seguir?

¿Quién va a apoyar a estos/as jóvenes que anhelan la legalización, pero a la misma vez indicarle de la manera más reflexiva y sensible: ¿Qué pasaría si la ley DREAM se aprobara tal y como está ahora?

¿Qué va a hacer ese o esa joven legalizado/a cuando él o ella sea enviado/a a Colombia para matar a sindicalistas o a rebeldes en la selva? ¿Qué va a hacer esa juventud legalizada cuando sea enviada a la frontera mexicana y se le ordene apuntar el fusil a una familia de inmigrantes cruzando la misma frontera que cruzó su familia?

¿Cómo se va a entrar por la puerta para ofrecer un análisis revolucionario, marxista-leninista si se está atacando su lucha?

A pesar de los resultados de las elecciones, no nos equivoquemos al respecto: los latinos y latinas no están en venta. Nuestra historia está repleta de fervor revolucionario. Sólo tenemos que recuperarla.

Cuando lo hagamos no vamos a orientarnos a Colin Powell, sino a Mumia Abu-Jamal, no al Partido Demócrata, sino al Partido Comunista de Cuba, no a Marco Rubio, sino a Fidel Castro, no a la gobernadora Susana Martínez, de Nuevo México, sino a la hermana revolucionaria Lolita Lebrón.

Reviviremos las ideas del Che Guevara, un gran líder revolucionario de herencia latina. El Che dijo: “Hay que tener en cuenta que el imperialismo es un sistema mundial, la última etapa del capitalismo — y debe ser derrotado en una confrontación mundial”.

Camaradas y amigos/as, iniciemos esa confrontación mundial aquí mismo, ahora mismo, aquí en las entrañas del monstruo. Ha llegado el momento. El momento es ahora. No hay forma de avanzar, si no es la revolución. El sistema capitalista ha agotado sus posibilidades. No hay otra opción sino abolirlo y construir el socialismo. □

Panel del gobierno hace el trabajo sucio patronal intentando recortar el Seguro Social y el Medicare

Por Deirdre Griswold

Otro gran fraude está siendo perpetrado para que los ricos puedan salirse con la suya. Su arma es el miedo. Los grandes medios de comunicación están llenos de expertos explicando que el gobierno debe reducir el presupuesto nacional o si no todo se derrumbará. ¿Y cómo hay que recortarlo? Atacando el Seguro Social y el Medicare, en primer lugar. En otras palabras, atacando a los/as ancianos/as y los/as enfermos/as.

Ese es el mensaje que sale ahora de la comisión nombrada por el presidente Barack Obama para bregar con el déficit presupuestario. El panel bipartidista está co-presidido por el demócrata Erskine Bowles, ex consejero en jefe de la Casa Blanca durante Clinton y el republicano Alan Simpson, un ex senador de Wyoming.

La comisión fue nombrada el pasado invierno pero se abstuvo de anunciar

sus recomendaciones hasta después de las elecciones. Tanto demócratas como republicanos vieron con simpatía ese plan pues ni uno ni otro quiere ser responsable por lo que sin duda es la acción más impopular en años.

Los financieros ricos y los líderes corporativos en los Estados Unidos que componen la clase dominante, han estado a la ofensiva contra la clase trabajadora desde hace muchos años. Han reestructurado la industria, remplazando a los/as trabajadores/as con máquinas. Han llevado su capital al exterior para explotar a trabajadores/as con paga aún más baja, y luego han exigido a los/as trabajadores/as aquí que acepten menos paga o si no pierden sus empleos.

Pero con todo eso, su sistema capitalista entró en una vorágine hace tres años y respecto a los empleos, todavía no se ha recuperado. Las fuentes de ingresos del

gobierno cayeron con la recesión capitalista. La administración echó millones de millones de dólares a los bancos y a las corporaciones automotrices para rescatarlas.

Y el año pasado los ricos hicieron que sus políticos a todos los niveles del gobierno votaran para recortar los presupuestos de servicios sociales — para que entonces hubiera mucho dinero para pagar el interés a los banqueros por préstamos de años pasados y para pagar al complejo militar-industrial por todo el costoso aparato usado para llevar a cabo las guerras e invasiones imperialistas.

El gobierno federal está profundamente endeudado y tiene un déficit. ¿Pero por qué? No porque los/as trabajadores/as aquí reciban demasiados beneficios. Dada la tremenda riqueza que existe en este país, es escandalosa la falta de buenas escuelas, cuidado de salud, viviendas, pensiones y otros servicios sociales estatales necesarios.

Estados Unidos están muy por detrás de otros países desarrollados en estos campos.

El otro lado de la moneda — literalmente — es la miserable cantidad de impuestos pagados por los ricos, los cuales han sido cortados y cortados y cortados mientras que los ingresos netos de los/as trabajadores/as se han contraído.

Más dinero para los bancos, las corporaciones y la máquina de guerra. Menos impuestos para los ricos. El resultado: un enorme déficit. Es muy simple.

Pero el panel no lo ve así. Ellos quieren subir la edad de jubilación de los/as trabajadores/as en este país a 69 años, y a la misma vez recortar nuestros beneficios. Sí, el mensaje es: trabaje hasta que fallezca.

¿Recuerda todo el dinero que pagó por su retiro con cada cheque de pago? Usted pensó que era su dinero, que era parte de su sueldo que el gobierno ponía en el

Continua a página 10